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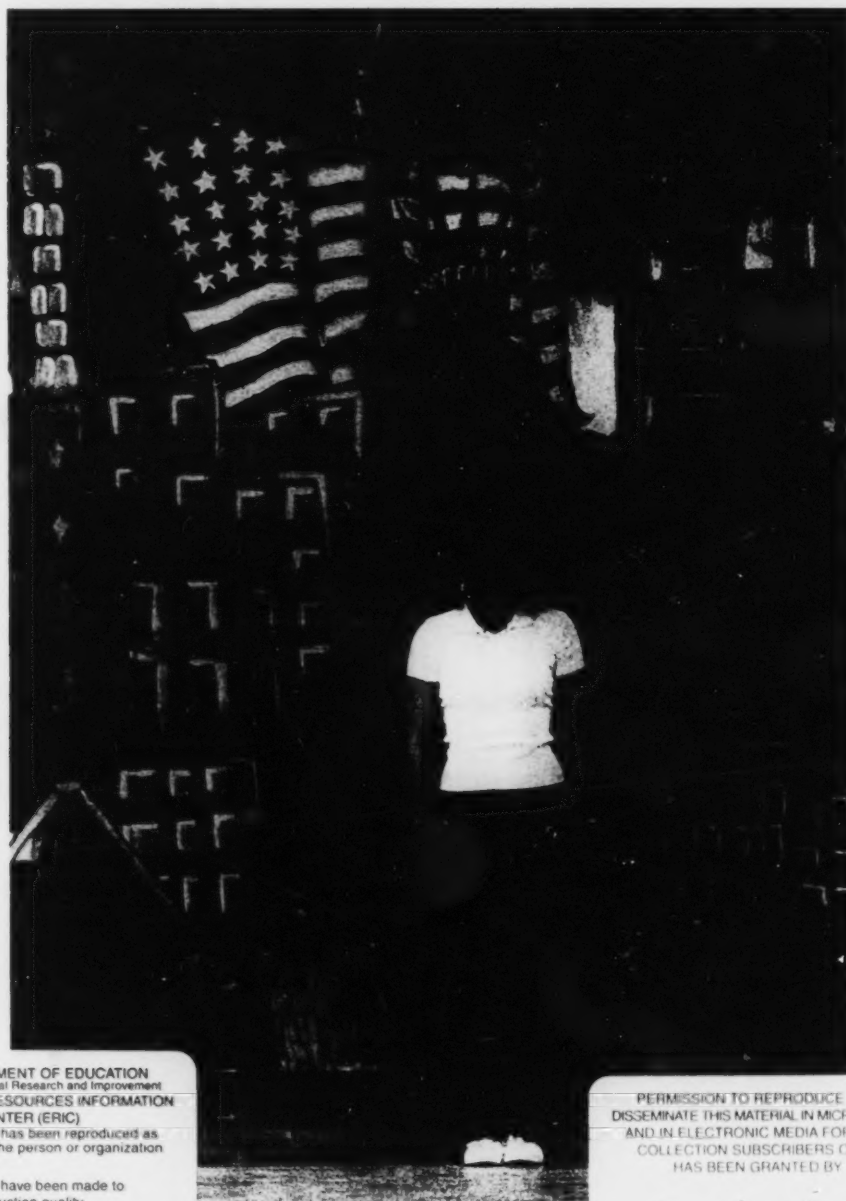
In 1992, the National Coalition of Advocates for Students received a grant to support a national project to examine social relationships between immigrant students and children of established residents. This book documents activities from the Looking for America project at seven diverse U.S. public schools and offers conclusions and recommendations to guide those undertaking similar efforts in other schools. The experiences of these 7 urban schools (4 high schools, 1 elementary school, and 2 middle schools), opinions of their students, and responses of 182 staff members were used to distill the following action steps for change: (1) create a climate for change; (2) establish an intergroup relations team; (3) develop a school profile; (4) make an inventory of resources; (5) involve the community; and (6) make a plan. Case studies of each of the project schools explore the intergroup relations activities in each. Four appendixes discuss study methodology and intergroup relations, describe 12 resource organizations, and describe the National Coalition of Advocates for Students. (SLD)

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Looking for America Volume II

Seven Schools
Experimenting
with Intergroup
Relations

A REPORT FROM THE
NATIONAL COALITION
OF ADVOCATES
FOR STUDENTS



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Volume II

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Looking for America *Volume II*

*Seven Schools Experimenting
with Intergroup Relations*

A REPORT FROM THE NATIONAL COALITION
OF ADVOCATES FOR STUDENTS

EXECUTIVE CO-DIRECTORS:
JOAN FIRST
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October 1995

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The photographs contained in this report were taken at Looking for America school sites. There is no relationship between a particular child and the text.

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Foreword

In 1992, the National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS) received a grant from the Rights and Social Justice Program of the Ford Foundation to support a national project to examine social relationships between immigrant students and children of established residents. This book documents project activities at seven diverse U.S. public schools and offers subsequent conclusions and recommendations to guide those undertaking similar efforts in other schools.

Since the inception of Looking for America (LFA) three years ago, the project's goals have become increasingly relevant. During the next two to three decades, all U.S. social institutions will be engaged in a struggle to cope with the many challenges generated by the nation's demographic diversity. The great demographic shifts now underway will fundamentally alter how our institutions carry out their responsibilities.

Some policymakers, frightened by the prospect of rising populations of color, seek to reverse this trend by establishing federal and state policies to deprive newcomers of certain benefits, including the right to attend public schools. However, no policy enacted by Congress, no state referendum barring young immigrants from school, and no local ordinance can reverse the demographic changes now underway within the United States for these changes are deeply rooted in the ages and birth rates of populations already well established in this country.

While it is true that public schools across the country are having difficulty meeting the needs of diverse student populations, an examination of schools in the most diverse states reveals that foreign-born children play a small role in creating the serious problems of resource shortages, overcrowding, and inappropriate curriculum and instruction. Florida schools, for example, are attended by 133,000 students with limited English proficiency. Of that number, about one-third are foreign-born; the remainder are U.S. citizens. It makes no sense to tell the parents of these children to "take them back home"; they are at home.

Neither are parents of foreign-born students likely to return children to their homeland. Like all good parents, most will help their child brave the dangers of a U.S. inner city rather than face all-out war back home. Most will endure racism and economic struggle when the only alternative

for their child is egregious abuse of human rights or poverty that threatens their survival.

The realities of widespread social change are most evident in the great gateway cities and in the states where these cities are located—Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Boston, and Miami. Here, multiracial, multi-ethnic, multilingual societies already exist, although it is uncertain whether these societies will be harmonious. During the next decade, suburbs, medium-sized cities, small towns, and rural communities will undergo similar change at both “macro” and “micro” levels. The changes will be “macro” because much about life in the United States will be altered, including its political and social landscapes; they will be “micro” because millions of individual human interactions will be affected daily in thousands of different settings.

While some adults may live out their lives in the U.S. in racial, ethnic, or linguistic enclaves, it is unlikely that their children will do so. Because all of society comes together in public schools, schools are at the cutting edge of social change. The silence about race and class that echoes in most public schools must be broken. Although adults may be afraid that conflict will erupt, if children do not learn to discuss these subjects and to negotiate differences of race, language, and culture, greater conflict is ensured.

A successful multicultural society requires all of its residents to develop the capacity to acknowledge and respect differences and to identify and embrace similarities. The unfamiliar must be explored until it becomes familiar and comfortable. When such exploration is characterized by respect for individual and group-lived experiences, customs, and language, serious conflict can be averted.

How adults in schools relate to each other and to students is extremely important. Teachers and administrators may choose to model racism and prejudice in their interactions. Or they may act deliberately to improve a school's social climate, lifting expectations and supporting school success for all children. Professional educators must assign to themselves the task of creating as many opportunities as possible for students of all ages and all groups to work together across barriers of language, race, and culture to attain common goals. Central office administrators must see that schools have the resources they need to support these efforts—including staff development to help educators come to terms with the race, class, and gender-based prejudices that undercut their leadership and abilities to serve as positive role models. Universities and teacher training institutions must find new ways to prepare adults for today's classroom.

This book documents the real experiences of seven public schools that participated in the Looking for America project. While it does not offer definitive answers, it does tell an optimistic story of adults and students with the will and imagination to change their schools for the better.

As more schools undertake this important work—and undertake it they must—they will build on the lessons learned here and, in turn, contribute to the small but growing body of knowledge about how to improve relations between and among adults and students in schools. With this knowledge, schools can be made ready for the challenging task ahead.

Joan First
Executive Co-Director

Contents

Blueprint for Change 1

Part I: Overview 7

1 LISTENING TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS 9

I. Listening to Students 10

II. Listening to Teachers 18

Part II: Case Studies 25

2 INTERGROUP RELATIONS CHICAGO STYLE: NOT THE SAME OLD FESTIVAL 27

Steinmetz Academic Center, *Chicago, Illinois* 28

Fact Sheet 34

LFA School Activities 35

3 LEADERSHIP FROM THE TOP 37

Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, *Fargo, North Dakota* 38

Fact Sheet 42

LFA School Activities 43

4 FORGING COMMUNITY LINKAGES 45

Robert E. Lee Senior High School, *Houston, Texas* 46

Fact Sheet 51

LFA School Activities 52

5	CAN THE BEST BE BETTER?	55
	Belmont High School, <i>Los Angeles, California</i>	56
	<i>Fact Sheet</i>	61
	<i>LFA School Activities</i>	62
6	INVISIBLE WALLS	63
	Jay Cooke Middle School, <i>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</i>	64
	<i>Fact Sheet</i>	68
	<i>LFA School Activities</i>	69
7	MEETING RESISTANCE WITH PERSISTENCE	71
	Kenneth Henderson Middle School, <i>Garden City, Kansas</i>	72
	<i>Fact Sheet</i>	76
	<i>LFA School Activities</i>	77
8	BUILDING ALLIANCES: CREATING "US"	79
	Miami Beach Senior High School, <i>Miami Beach, Florida</i>	80
	<i>Fact Sheet</i>	86

Part III: Summary **87**

9	REFLECTIONS	89
	I. Elements of Success	91
	II. Lessons Learned	97

Appendices **99**

A: Methodology	101
B: Intergroup Relations	103
C: Resources	107
D: National Coalition of Advocates for Students	113

Blueprint for Change

Looking for America's central finding:

Professional educators must create regular and sustained opportunities for students of all ages and all groups to work together to attain common goals across barriers of language, race, and culture.

The action steps presented here are intended for implementation at local schools. Drawn from the experiences of the Looking for America project, these strategies will be useful to any individual or group seeking to address chronic negative interactions between student groups or between students and faculty.

Create a Climate for Change

- The initial impetus for a deliberate effort to improve intergroup relations can come from any one of several places in school. Action can be initiated by a school administrator or by teachers, counselors, students, or parents.
- If you are alone in your concern, your first task is to enlist others in your cause. It will take a group of five to ten committed individuals to accomplish meaningful change.
- If you are the school principal, you must convince others to join you. If you are not the principal, you will need to build a strong link between your effort and the school administration. The school principal can support such an effort by leading it, participating in it, or endorsing it.

Establish an Intergroup Relations Team

- Establish an Intergroup Relations Team that reflects all racial, ethnic, and language groups in school. Identify leaders from various groups, earn their trust, and enlist their support. Access all segments of the school community.
- Expect some conflict at team meetings. The work may go more smoothly if one meeting is devoted to identifying and discussing problems and a subsequent meeting is devoted to possible solutions. If no one on the team has strong group facilitation skills, it may be necessary to identify someone from the outside to act as facilitator.
- Schedule regular team meetings. Acquire released time for team members, if possible. Allow time for members to bond into a community of learners, then set a deliberate course to make the team smart about the school by developing a detailed profile (see below).
- Members of the local school council should be regularly briefed on the team's findings and work. Ideally, a member of the school council should serve on the team. The team should also report its findings and strategies to the student council.

-
- Decide whether to make a public report on the team's effort to inform itself. If a public report is made, it should offer solutions as well as problems. Alternatively, the team may wish simply to summarize its findings for its own use.

Develop a School Profile

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- At team meetings, share anecdotes about how students of various groups relate to others. Discuss examples of how faculty members serve as positive or negative role models.
 - Conduct a formal assessment of need by surveying or interviewing teachers, students, and parents from all racial, ethnic, and language groups. Analyze the data and report back to those who participated in the process.

-
- Gather, catalogue, and examine school data about:

Discipline: Is the discipline code appropriate to the school's diversity? Are disciplinary referrals closely monitored by students' race, ethnicity, and language? Are disciplinary referrals racially or ethnically disparate? Do disproportionately high rates of suspension or expulsion exist for certain student groups? Is help provided to teachers with high referral rates? Is all of this data regularly reported to the entire school community?

Student Placement/Achievement: Are all students entitled to learn in integrated, heterogeneous learning environments? Do all students have the opportunity to gain critical thinking skills? What do test scores indicate about academic achievement levels of different student groups?

Extracurricular Activities: Do all student groups participate equally in non-academic activities? How does membership in school clubs look when examined through a lens of race, ethnicity, and language? Who plays on sports teams?

Dropout Rates: Do students from some racial, ethnic, or language groups leave school before graduation more often than others? What are staff perceptions of the reasons why these differences exist? What do parents and families believe about why their children leave school early?

Self-segregation: Students self-segregate in all schools to some degree. Organize a team walking tour of the school to observe how much self-segregation occurs. Who is the class president? Who runs for student council? Who are the cheerleaders? Who determines what music will be played at the prom?

- **Develop an understanding of power imbalances in the school and the community:** Gain a keen awareness of which groups have power and which do not. As the team moves forward with its plan, it may be necessary to accommodate powerful stakeholders; it may also be necessary to help those who are powerless. Power is never redistributed without a conscious decision to yield by those who have it. For example, administrators and teachers may decide to step aside to allow others to sit on school committees and councils. Current officeholders may encourage students from new groups to run for student council or class president.

Make an Inventory of Resources

- Review the current literature. Visit the local university library or contact the CHIME Resource Center at NCAS to request a no-cost custom literature search by calling toll-free at 1-800-441-7192.
- Find out what resources are available from the school district's central office.
- Contact national organizations to identify resources (see list in Appendix C: Resources) or contact the CHIME Resource Center.
- Identify local town/city-funded agencies or departments that might provide resources.
- Contact the local Human Relations Commission. Its members may be willing to help or they may have resources to share.
- Find out if any local professional organizations are willing to help.

Involve the Community

- Talk with the staff and leadership of local organizations that serve various racial, ethnic, or language groups in the community. Start a

true dialogue by talking to people from all sectors of the community about their perceptions of the school.

- Find a caring person from each racial, ethnic, and language group in the school population to get involved with team activities.
- Conduct informal discussions with individuals from each racial, ethnic, and language sector of the community. Individual team members might meet with one or more parents or representatives from each community to learn their perspectives about intergroup relations at school.

Make a Plan

- Develop a detailed written plan with the specific purpose of deliberately creating multiple opportunities for students from different groups to share activities that lead to common goals.
- Review the resource list in Appendix C: Resources. Request a CHIME Resource Center bibliography on conflict resolution. Examine the problems and resources you have identified. Figure out which problems are most urgent. Balance realistic hopes for success with the urgency of specific problems. Urgency should always be the determining factor.
- Resist quick fixes. Don't be tempted just to purchase a published curriculum and consider the problem solved. Materials alone are not a solution. Carefully considered processes must be developed to ensure their effective use.
- Identify strategies as either short term or long term. For example, to address ethnic conflict a review of school policies to change those that help to generate conflict is a short-term strategy. A long-term strategy might be to develop a class in ethnic studies, to institute a new curriculum, or to hire a new teacher.

-
- Think about who really has the power to solve a specific problem. This is different than assigning responsibility to fix a problem or assigning blame that a problem exists. If children are fighting at a bus stop, for example, that is a neighborhood problem rather than a school problem. If the team does not have the power to intervene, build an alliance with those who can—in this instance, parents and community members.
-
- Strategies should fit the culture of the school. Activities should be appropriate to students' ages and grade levels.
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- Be as inclusive as possible when working to solve problems. No matter how skilled and committed, the team will not be able to bring about change by itself. Although only a few people may be involved in the beginning, others will be engaged over time if they are welcomed to join.
-
- Make intergroup relations part of systemic school reform. At first, improving the school's social climate may seem to some as only icing on the cake; with time, persistence, and progress, it should become an automatic component of any school improvement effort.
-
- Always be on the lookout for additional resources. Don't take "no" for an answer. Most schools have sufficient resources if the administration and school community have the will to address school climate issues.
-
- Never be discouraged by a lack of resources. Committed people can accomplish great things with just their courage and determination.
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Overview

I LISTENING TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS 9

I. Listening to Students 10

II. Listening to Teachers 18

To gain an "insider's" view of school culture and day-to-day experience, Looking for America staff conducted written and oral interviews with students and teachers at the project sites.

Students were gathered in a series of school-site focus groups managed by a facilitator using guiding questions to spark discussion on aspects of intergroup relations in school and the community. These conversations were transcribed for subsequent analysis by project staff.

Teachers and other school staff completed a written survey at six of the seven project sites. The survey asked staffers to identify major problems in intergroup relations at their school and to suggest possible solutions. Quotations offered below are representative of the feelings and views expressed by many of the students and teachers.

Listening to Students and Teachers



"The cause that permeates through all of these problems is fear. Fear of change. Fear of letting go of what our parents taught us. Fear of stretching oneself into unknown territory."

—Teacher

"Fear is something you can change."

—Student

I. *Listening to Students*

Growing up in the 1980s, this generation seems to hold a subtle view of race relations. Race often connotes more than just skin color—it is also about class, culture, and identity.

For many students, high school is a time when they claim an identity. The social consequences are often complex and difficult. A recent article in *West* magazine describes the complicated racial/ethnic landscape suburban teenagers face in Northern California:

"When White kids call their parents 'racist' for nagging them about their baggy pants; when they learn Spanish to talk to their boyfriends; when Mexican-American boys feel themselves descended in spirit from White 'uncles'; when children of mixed marriages insist that they are whatever race they say they are, all of them are more than just confused.

"They're inching toward what Andrea Jones calls 'the dream of what the 21st century should be.' They're also facing the complicated reality of what their 21st century will be."¹

Students today adapt to a quickly changing cultural landscape, while adults often play catch-up, developing strategies and a vocabulary for dealing with ethnic conflicts only after they have erupted in the classroom. Indeed, because most public school students today study and work in more integrated environments than their parents, it is likely that students have something important to teach adults.

Ready to Face the Challenge

Students at all schools were initially reticent to speak about intergroup relations. When they did begin to speak, they were often pessimistic and negative about relations among groups at their schools. As they spoke, however, it became clear that they had many opinions on the subject and were ready to face the challenge of finding solutions.

Many students feel that intergroup relations are critical to their generation's social development. They want adults to give them a chance to be heard on the issue and want the opportunity to help find solutions. Beyond their bravado, most students seem sincerely to believe in their own capacity to initiate open dialogue and to listen, believing that simple acts, in the end, can change attitudes and behaviors.

1. Nell Bernstein, "Goin' Gangsta, Choosin' Cholita," *West* magazine, San Jose (CA) Mercury News, November 3, 1994.

Most students have sophisticated views of how racism shapes their lives. They understand that neighborhoods, clothes, cliques, and hairstyles all carry messages about racial and cultural identification. Students are quick to say they pick up veiled racist messages from adults. Many report that teachers respond to students with different attitudes or different tones of voice and note how such behavior can be perceived as racist. Students are also aware of how peer or teacher approval of racist attitudes can give license to overtly racist behavior.

Students underscore the need for teachers to listen to their comments and complaints in the classroom. Teacher indifference is sometimes interpreted as hostility or racism. Students suggest that many of the intergroup problems in school—particularly between teachers and students of different races—could be averted if teachers would just listen. Students believe that open conversations will help teachers to learn more about young people's needs and values.

Students also voice a need to locate themselves within the curriculum. Many students—minority and immigrant students in particular—feel completely isolated and detached from the history they learn in school. To them, the United States in history books bears little or no relation to the United States they see around them. To many, their history courses seem irrelevant. They would prefer a history curriculum with a grassroots perspective that focuses on the history of the local community and its component groups.

Finally, students are hopeful about people's capacity to change. They are able to identify signs of hope. Across the board, they believe that approaches to intergroup relations need to be "people-centered" and, in particular, "student-centered." They view group projects and activities that bring diverse students together to work for a common purpose as being highly effective, helping students to learn about each other in a "natural way."

Confronting Racism

At all seven sites, students recounted vivid memories of parents or teachers uttering a disparaging comment or warning about another race.

"I remember when I came here for the first two months, I couldn't go to school 'cause I didn't have the papers. It takes two months to wait, so I was working for my father. And it was all Cuban people, and they were often very prejudiced against Black people. I don't know why, but I learned that from being here. And I remember they asked my dad, 'What school are you going to send him to?,' and he said, 'I'll probably send him to Beach High School,' and they said 'No, no, don't do that. A lot of Black people go there and they come from their own neighborhoods. Try to send him to a school where there's no Black people.'" [Miami]

Students attribute the racist attitudes of their parents, in part, to a generation gap—a difference of experiences:

"If I come here with a Black or Hispanic, my Dad would look at me differently, like I'm not Polish anymore. They want us to stay together, not get mixed up." [Chicago]

"My parents were born and raised in Poland and they were raised in their own culture. Maybe they don't understand the other person, maybe that's why." [Chicago]

Students realize that, as young adults, they no longer have to accept the attitudes and beliefs of their parents. Many recognize adolescence as a time when individuals begin to take responsibility for their own beliefs and behaviors.

"Your parents can't just tell you, 'I don't want you talking to him 'cause he's White,' or 'cause he's this,' or 'cause he talks with a slang,' 'cause that's wrong. You got to ask your parents 'Why?'" [Miami]

Moreover, not all students believe that their parents are hopeless. Many remarked that adults too can change, if given the opportunity to interact and develop an understanding of different cultural groups.

"When my dad came, he didn't like to mix with other countries. He didn't know where my Mom was from, but he didn't really care. He loved her, so he changed his ways." [Los Angeles]

Students are aware that racism starts early in life. They realize you need to start early to change racist attitudes.

"You hear certain things while you are growing up. You see things and so right away you put a judgement on certain kinds of people. Once you're already raised and you're an adult, you already have that classification and you don't even want to take the time out to say, 'Oh.'" [Chicago]

"By the time you reach high school, your ways are set. Trying to change them is like trying to change the person all over again." [Houston]

Students are also aware that segregation persists in school.

"You sit in the lunchroom and one day you can definitely see this corner over here is all White, while on the other side it's Hispanic, and then it's Black on the other side." [Houston]

For recently immigrated students, intergroup tensions arise in the struggle to overcome language barriers and to acculturate to a different culture. While a common language helps to develop a sense of group solidarity, it can also alienate young people from others who misinterpret their intentions.

"In Poland, there is only one culture. It's hard to meet somebody from a different culture. This was like a whole different thing to me. I had to understand the other person. I had to understand their cultures. I had to get to know them better. It's hard." [Chicago]

"Sometimes Black people talk in another language. You don't understand what they saying. They understand what you're saying, because most of them understand our language because they all go to public school. They are in the classroom talking English, then all of a sudden they start talking their language and you think they are talking about you, then they go back to English. People think they are talking about them." [Philadelphia]

Peer Pressure

Peer pressure compels ethnic group cohesion and solidarity in two ways: students are pressured by their peers to stay within their group and refuse to interact with members of the other groups; students are pressured to ridicule other groups.

"Let's say there's ten or fifteen people in a group and one may want to associate with people from other races. But since that person is hanging around that crowd, these people say, 'How could you be like that? How could you hang around with them?' So they feel pressured and they just keep quiet and stay in their own crowd." [Chicago]

Many young people feel that fear and discomfort with the unknown lies beneath prejudice and stereotypes about other groups.

"I wouldn't use the word 'ignorant.' I would say 'fear.' Because ignorance is something totally different. Ignorance is something that you are that you cannot change. Fear is something you can change. Say if she and I were together, and I was with her people, with her race. I would feel uncomfortable. I wouldn't know where I stood. I wouldn't really know what was going on. If she was with me, with my people, she would probably feel the same way. Not that she's ignorant, but because she's scared, she hasn't been around this type of group before, she doesn't know what's going on." [Houston]

Some students express a respect for members of others groups and say that knowing different people enriches their lives and helps them to grow. As one student explained, some young people are willing to look beyond skin color to "see what's inside."

"I mix because I can learn about that person or their background or where they come from. I mix because I like to have a lot of mixed friends. I don't want just all Blacks, 'cause I'm not racist." [Philadelphia]

"There's nothing wrong with staying with your own group, but it's better to intermingle with other races because you get to learn about their cultures and their backgrounds. I have nothing against Polish. Maybe I hang out with her and get to know her and she's a very nice person. But most of the time, you see people hanging with their own groups. They wear the same clothes and like the same things. I hang with my race, but have no problem talking to somebody else. You get to learn more."
[Chicago]

Teachers As Role Models

Many students feel that teachers, as a whole, do not care, do not want to be involved in their lives, and do not respect or understand them. Angry because they feel their teachers don't want to listen to them, students are hungry for opportunities to voice their opinions and beliefs.

"I went to my teacher and asked, 'Why don't you just get us together, have us talk in groups, make us a class.' But the teachers around here don't like talking to us. They don't want to talk to us. Out of all the teachers we have in the school, basically only three want to talk to us and know how we feel." [Chicago]

Teachers generally are not aspiring role models for fostering collaboration and understanding among members of diverse ethnic groups. As one student insightfully suggested, teachers could help students get along better by "getting along with the kids."

"Whenever you argue with a kid, you are down at that kid's level. No grownup is supposed to be arguing with a kid. If you just ignore the kid, and don't say anything, a lot of them get the right idea in the end."
[Philadelphia]

Young people at each site shared experiences of prejudicial beliefs and racist behavior among staff toward students. Some of the racist behavior was expressed as lowered teacher expectations and fewer interactions in the classroom.

"If he says something, the teacher will listen to him, but if I say something, she'll ignore me. Probably because she thinks that he knows everything, but I don't know anything." [Miami]

"Some teachers are prejudiced. When I had a class last year, the Polish needed more help since they didn't understand the language. But sometimes they focus on nobody else. Maybe the teacher was Polish and he helped nobody else, and in another class they focused only on another race. So, I've got to go on my own and find help. There are a lot of teachers like that. They are prejudiced and have racism in them." [Chicago]

According to students, teachers also reveal bias in the monocultural lens through which they view curriculum and instruction. They erroneously assume that other countries' educational systems are inferior to the U.S.

"If you just make one mistake, teachers say, 'Well, did you learn that in Mexico?' Because they don't think it [the Mexican educational system] is as advanced as here. They think it's way behind." [Garden City]

In contrast, students at each site know teachers who care and want to listen. These teachers see their profession as more than teaching academic subjects. They are willing to take the extra step to help students understand and connect with them. These teachers are more likely to draw on students' cultural frameworks as they teach.

"Some teachers encourage us more. They say, 'We graduated, so you can graduate too.' We can joke around with them. We can be more ourselves." [Los Angeles]

Students frequently request that teachers offer instruction within a multicultural context that moves beyond the Eurocentric model—particularly in relation to history courses.

"I would like to get out of my class because it is U.S. history and it's portrayed about how they kick out the Mexicans, and how they fought everybody and then they got the country." [Los Angeles]

"Teachers should make it a part of the curriculum to have certain classes where you learn about other people. You have history class, but you don't learn that the Polish went through this and this, Black people went through this and that, and Hispanic people went through this and that. You learn Black people were slaves, but you don't learn that White people were slaves at one time, or that Hispanic people were slaves." [Chicago]

"It doesn't feel like you fit in, especially in history, because history is only about Europeans, about what they've done. If you really read it, it doesn't tell anyone else's story." [Houston]

Impact of LFA School Activities

At a number of project sites, students who actively engaged in shared tasks, events or activities were significantly impacted by the project. Activities were most effective when they promoted opportunities to build meaningful personal relationships around shared interests and common goals.

The International Festival at Steinmetz Academy in Chicago created a framework for activities that required energy and commitment from a diverse group of students. Animated and excited participants enthusiastically recounted the events of the festival, describing it as a "surprise," and "cool," and "like watching everybody's different culture." While working

together, students built bonds and relationships that they did not want to tear apart. In discussing their work for the festival, students commented, "A lot of people felt they respected each other" and "We got to know a lot of people that we didn't know."

The process of preparing for the International Festival brought diverse students together around a common purpose, increasing respect and understanding in ways they didn't expect. As one student declared, "You can tell everybody got together. It was like 'Oh, wow!'"

Students are split about whether such projects can successfully address racial tensions and incidents. Despite the festival's success, young people recognize the complexity of intergroup relations. A number of students point out that the International Festival did not deal with the pull of peer pressure or some of the underlying issues that cause tensions and fights among students. One student remarked skeptically, "There's always gonna be a leader, and there's always gonna be some followers. And this thing just keeps on growing."

Although project activity at Cooke Middle School in Philadelphia involved a smaller number of students, it provided opportunities for diverse students to come together around a common purpose through field trips, the Fellowship Farm, and pen pal activities. Animated youngsters at Cooke Middle School excitedly described the field trips they took and spontaneously shared information about their pen pals. One student felt having pen pals was especially helpful in nurturing better relations among kids because "they get to tell you about their culture and you get to tell them about your culture."

The Fellowship Farm experience had a clear impact on the students who attended, but it may have failed to foster ongoing collaboration and understanding among groups because of a lack of follow-up. While young people at Cooke Middle School recognize these activities are important strategies for fostering positive intergroup relations, they also understand that continued opportunities to interact are critical for sustained growth and change.

Activities that teach students about other cultures, especially if presented in an active and creative format, seem to have a positive effect on students' understanding and appreciation for diverse groups. Students at Cooke Middle School were eager to share their stories about the Lion Dance and the Kung Fu demonstrations that were part of a series of cultural assemblies. Alive with excitement, the youngsters drowned each other out in their eagerness to talk.

Cultural assemblies seem less effective for high school students because they are viewed by many as superficial and lacking depth. Students at Steinmetz Academy and Belmont High in Los Angeles actually booed at such assemblies. One young woman at Belmont High complained:

"They're forcing one hour for the whole culture and I don't think it is right to try and teach like that. Something from somebody's culture takes a long time to learn, and they're trying to teach all of it in one hour."

[Los Angeles]

Project activities at Henderson Middle School in Garden City focused on teaching multicultural knowledge to students. While some children were absorbed by the details of the activities, others became more aware of similarities and differences among cultures and learned more about themselves.

"Sometimes you learn about yourself, the similarities you have or the differences." [Garden City]

Summary

Students have strong opinions and clear ideas about how to foster collaboration and understanding at their schools. Three general observations emerge from the students' discussions:

1. **Students want more opportunities for diverse groups to interact with each other.**

Young people generally agree that an important first step is to provide regular opportunities for students to interact through the integration of classes and other activities. Bringing students of different ethnicities together to share values, beliefs, experiences, language, and other aspects of culture is also seen as a sound strategy to foster collaboration and accommodation among groups.

2. **Students want to have a voice and be heard by teachers and adults.**

Many students believe that shared activities alone do not necessarily address the underlying causes of intergroup tensions and hostilities. Students feel that they need a forum to discuss issues of race and strategies to resolve problems that arise in school. Regular opportunities to share experiences; to talk about cultures, values, and beliefs; and to discuss experiences of bias and racism is seen as a key strategy.

3. **Students want the curriculum to reflect more accurately the contributions and values of diverse cultures.**

Students point to the need for curricula that more accurately reflect the contributions of various racial and ethnic groups to the growth and development of U.S. society—changes that would allow students to learn the histories and cultures of their own and other groups, and enable all students to "feel like you fit in" the larger picture.

II. Listening to Teachers

Of the 182 staff members who completed the LFA survey, about 80 percent are teachers. Three-quarters of the teachers surveyed are Caucasian. Other staff members surveyed include administrators, support service staff, para-professionals, and a handful of specialists. Belmont High is not included in the staff survey.

According to school staff, problems with intergroup relations fall within four main areas: 1) lack of knowledge, understanding, and respect of different cultures; 2) language differences and communication problems; 3) prejudicial beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors; and 4) segregation of students and staff by ethnicity. At three of the sites, staff also identified lack of parental support and sparse home-school connections as barriers.

Lack of Knowledge, Understanding, and Respect

Almost one-half identify a lack of understanding, knowledge, and respect of different cultural values, beliefs, and traditions as a source of tension and conflict.

"Students are not well aware of, and do not value, other cultures."
[Chicago]

"We are a homogeneous, middle-class staff and have had little opportunity or exposure to other cultures. The school has probably the greatest heterogeneity of any school in our district, but we have a great deal to learn." [Fargo]

"When problems do arise, they seem to stem from lack of understanding of the different cultures and languages." [Philadelphia]

Barriers to Communication

Language differences and communication difficulties are identified by almost half the respondents as obstacles.

"There is suspicion that 'others' are talking about students who are unable to understand the language." [Chicago]

"Parents of different backgrounds do not communicate because of language barriers." [Houston]

"The major problem in intergroup relations among students is a lack of communication. Many students never learn the names of students in their classes. It is difficult to hate someone if you know them personally."
[Houston]

Teachers express frustration because they cannot spend the "one-to-one" time non-English-speaking children require to build healthy relationships and flourish in the classroom. Staff cite barriers between students and staff, and parents and staff, that are created by language differences. A few respondents stress the need to encourage the speaking of English; others emphasize the need for more translators and bilingual staff.

Prejudicial Beliefs, Attitudes, and Behaviors

Forty percent of respondents note prejudicial attitudes, beliefs, and/or behaviors as sources of problems. Stereotyping, cultural elitism, rigidity and closed minds, ridiculing among students, and verbal and physical aggression stemming from name calling are all noted by school staff.

At many sites, respondents point to parents and staff as perpetrators of prejudiced beliefs and behaviors and offer examples of bias and discriminatory behavior.

"The causes of intergroup relations could be with adults judging the students' behavior in class differently. Some students get harsher punishment than those of another color or race who have done the same thing wrong." [Garden City]

"Seventy-five percent of the counselors exercise bias in their approach to colleges, scheduling, and financial aid. There is an attitude that ESL and transitional students are deficient, lower in intelligence, not capable of doing well in college-bound classes, and not capable of going to college. I have personally witnessed actions on the part of Hispanic, White, and Black counselors expressing to students the attitude that they will not make it in college—that this is not for them." [Houston]

"Among parents, old established prejudices prevent open minds."
[Chicago]

"I have seen prejudice and have been a victim of it among students, parents, and staff of all races and ethnicities. There is a great deal of underlying hate resulting from unresolved problems, coming from parents, teachers, drummed up by the media." [Miami]

"The prejudice of parents is passed on to their children." [Garden City]

Segregation of Students and Staff

Practices and attitudes of separatism and segregation among students, teachers, and other staff are identified as problems by a third of the respondents. In some cases, staff emphasize how racial and ethnic segregation in the community reinforce segregatory behavior within school. Respondents point out how segregation results in isolation—particularly of non-English-speaking students—and contributes to misunderstanding.

"Students, parents, and teachers do not interact, and each group becomes isolated." [Chicago]

"Students stay within their own groups. Given the chance, they often segregate themselves." [Garden City]

"Clubs and classes are defined by separatist principles. Those club sponsors who actively work to integrate club membership find that one group dominates and others drop out. This could be White domination, and Hispanics and Blacks drop out, or it could be Hispanic domination, and others drop out." [Houston]

"Students tend to stay within their own ethnic group. There is limited contact except in class." [Philadelphia]

Respondents express concerns that schools fail to provide adequate opportunities for students and teachers to interact and work together across ethnic and racial boundaries.

"The problem is the lack of opportunities for staff, parents, and students to mingle and work together. The classroom setting is not enough." [Chicago]

"The problem is a lack of opportunities for students to interact with other students and for teachers to interact with other teachers. Minority students and teachers cluster in groups. They do not mix often—which leads to the heart of the problem in intergroup relations." [Houston]

"Some intergroup relations problems are caused by teacher and student schedules that don't allow amiable meetings to take place to discuss differences." [Philadelphia]

Home-School Connections

Many respondents see a lack of parent support and weak home-school connections as hindering efforts to foster positive alliances. While staff express concern about parent-school relationships, their approach to building partnerships with families and the degree to which they view each member of the partnership as equally responsible is notably different.

At Jefferson, staff appreciate the critical role that communication difficulties play in the lack of strong parent involvement and support for education, but see the importance of building strong bonds with parents in order to nurture a harmonious school community. They recognize that addressing the communication barriers alone will not solve all the difficulties in creating and sustaining vibrant home-school relations.

In contrast, at Henderson, about one-half of those expressing concerns about the lack of parent support and involvement specifically name parents' failure to teach morals, values, and discipline. Many of their statements have strong undercurrents of blaming parents and the home environment for friction among diverse groups at school, suggesting that staff members do not see their school as having responsibility for fostering collaboration and understanding among children and families of different cultural groups.

Respondents from Robert E. Lee High identify lack of parental support and involvement as a source of frustration, but recognize that a lack of involvement does not necessarily mean a lack of concern or caring. More likely, they feel, it stems from economic pressures, differences in cultural beliefs, and the limited education of parents.

Unique School Cultures

At two of the sites, staff identify problems that reflect the unique culture of the school in its local setting.

At Cooke Middle School, close to one-third of the respondents note tension between the administration and staff as a serious concern impeding positive intergroup relations. The teachers do not feel they have avenues for communicating with the administration or a voice in school decisions. The administration is not seen as providing a strong vision or caring leadership.

At Robert E. Lee High, one-fifth of the respondents call attention to socioeconomic disparities or class elitism as contributing to intergroup tensions and conflict.

Seeking Solutions

Most staff suggestions for advancing harmonious relations center on strategies and activities to foster crosscultural knowledge and promote integration. Surprisingly, few recommend activities or strategies to directly challenge prejudiced attitudes, despite the fact that these are identified as a major concern. Possibly, respondents believe that if students and staff are provided with numerous opportunities to interact across racial and ethnic boundaries, they will unravel racist assumptions and work towards harmony.

Almost 40 percent of respondents recommend strategies and activities intended to enhance knowledge, understanding, and respect for different cultures as a means to advance cultural understanding and respect. Most suggest specific activities, programs, guest speakers, special assemblies, or seminars and lectures to achieve the goal of crosscultural knowledge and respect. Some staff at each site emphasize the need to weave multicultural education throughout the fabric of each school day.

"Teach the importance of Hispanic, Black, and Oriental musicians, military, poets, educational people, in our history throughout the U.S. Learn about cultural differences and discuss the richness in appreciating these differences." [Garden City]

"I am currently teaching a class entitled American Cultural Studies. The intent of my class is to educate my students on the various cultures of the Americas. This education will hopefully break down some of the fear and irrationality concerning other cultures and ethnic groups." [Houston]

"Time should be allotted for staff development to make teachers aware of other cultures so they may have more information about the similarities and differences between each group." [Philadelphia]

"We must incorporate intergroup relations in every aspect of the school day. It must be a natural outcome of all activities, not as a separate entity. Once progress is made in this area, we move on to students and parents." [Chicago]

School staff also favor increased integration of ethnic groups as a central strategy to encourage and sustain knowledge and respect of diverse cultures. The focus of their suggested activities is generally to have students from diverse groups play or work together, but not necessarily to share their cultural beliefs, values, and traditions. A few respondents point to the importance of groups working together collaboratively or pursuing common goals, while others stress the need to focus on improving communication or building skills.

"Students, staff, and parents must be given opportunities to mix, mingle, and work together in non-classroom settings." [Chicago]

"Teachers should provide instructional situations for groups to work together with others from different groups." [Garden City]

"...developing, promoting, and pursuing worthwhile goals that cut across 'separatist' perceptions." [Houston]

"Social functions involving different ethnic backgrounds also unite and often create lasting bonds." [Miami]

At Henderson Middle and Jefferson Elementary, respondents recommend activities to address language and communication barriers. Some stress the need for English language development, while others see the

importance of "more language development on all sides," along with provision of interpreters and translators as critical links to forge sound relations among the various members of the school community.

"A room for new ESL students where they are placed until they have basic command of the language." [Fargo]

"Translators for conferences, phone messages, and messages sent home concerning happenings at school." [Fargo]

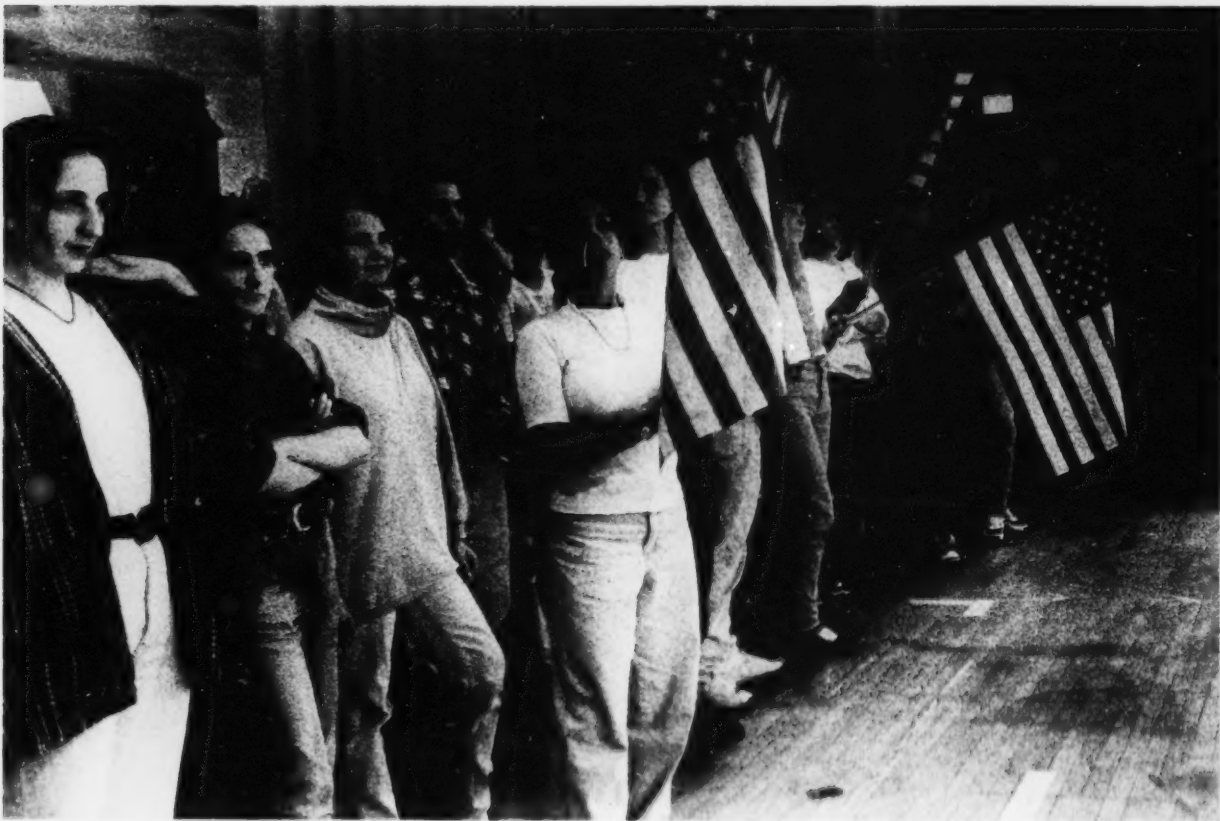
"More individuals, especially teachers, becoming bilingual." [Garden City]

"Education for all parties in all languages." [Garden City]

Case Studies

- 2 INTERGROUP RELATIONS CHICAGO STYLE:
NOT THE SAME OLD FESTIVAL 27
- 3 LEADERSHIP FROM THE TOP 37
- 4 FORGING COMMUNITY LINKAGES 45
- 5 CAN THE BEST BE BETTER? 55
- 6 INVISIBLE WALLS 63
- 7 MEETING RESISTANCE WITH PERSISTENCE 71
- 8 BUILDING ALLIANCES: CREATING "US" 79

Intergroup Relations Chicago Style: Not the Same Old Festival



International festivals are sometimes viewed as superficial: the old food, fun, and music approach. But this Chicago school found deeper meaning in what could have been a shallow attempt to recognize culture. By engaging in positive collaboration toward a common goal, the students crossed over racial, linguistic, and ethnic boundaries to find ways to know each other as individuals.

Steinmetz Academic Center

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The northwest side of Chicago is a vast, sprawling area, home to many ethnic neighborhoods, old and new. A traditional home to new immigrant groups, today's northwest side includes enclaves of older European Americans, Mexican Americans, African Americans, and Polish immigrants. Historically a German neighborhood, the area immediately surrounding Steinmetz Academic Center has seen a recent influx of new Polish immigrants, drawn by links to Polish associations and mutual aid societies.

The student population at Steinmetz is a mixture of newly arrived Polish- and Spanish-speaking students from many parts of Chicago. Considered a "good school" in the Chicago public school system, Steinmetz Academic Center may be elected by students from various parts of the city. The student body, which is 35 percent Hispanic, 33 percent African American, 28 percent Caucasian, and 4 percent Asian and other, is a good reflection of the city.

Coming from ethnically distinct neighborhoods, students at Steinmetz have traditionally fraternized along racial and ethnic lines. A visitor can easily identify places in the hall or cafeteria where Polish students, Mexican Americans, African Americans, Central Americans, or Filipinos have staked out their territory. These divisions are friendly and accepted. However, friendly coexistence was destroyed when a dispute over a scratch on a car escalated to a riot between Polish and Mexican students. Rock throwing, fist fights, and name calling led parents to keep their children at home, fearing that Steinmetz was no longer safe.

In the wake of the riots, Principal Constantine Kiamos and the faculty, along with community members, sprung into action to heal the wounds left by the conflict. They enlisted the help of the Chicago Human Relations Commission which, for the past year, had worked with students in the school on a regular basis. Teachers used class time to talk through feelings with students and to develop solutions to disagreements. Students themselves took leadership roles in bringing the feuding groups together. A multicultural club was established. Nevertheless, feelings remained wounded and ready to erupt.

While searching for ways to help the Steinmetz community heal, faculty and administration discovered the Looking for America project, promptly applied, and were accepted. As the newly formed project team reviewed ideas, they decided to turn to the students themselves for direction.

The idea of an end-of-the-year, schoolwide International Festival was first proposed by students in "Unique Combinations," the school's multicultural club. They wanted a fun way to bring students together to learn about each others' cultures. Deborah Frankel, the club's co-sponsor, along with Michael Altman, were skeptical when students first brought up the idea. But their enthusiasm was so contagious that Frankel finally took the idea to the LFA team.

The team liked the idea, but were concerned about the demands of such a large project. As committed to running the project as the students were, teachers and other staff would have to be involved in the planning and supervision to ensure success. Steinmetz had endured major staff and salary reductions along with attendant increases in responsibilities. The team was not certain that teachers and other staff would be willing to take on more work.

At first, Principal Kiamos was suspicious. "Was a multicultural festival a real solution or just a party?" he wondered. "Would there be enough participation to make a difference?" On the other hand, Kiamos reasoned, ethnic festivals are a part of life in Chicago, something that students and teachers grew up with. In the end, he decided to give the festival a try. Kiamos trusted his team. The International Festival was, after all, the students' idea.

"The work sessions not only helped us design the mosaic, but also helped us discover the similarities and differences between cultures, and we all realized it is very easy to get along with one another, no matter what our ethnic background."

The festival would open with the dedication of ten mosaic panels in the school's entry hall. After the racial tensions at Steinmetz, Olivia Gude, a Chicago muralist, had approached Dr. Kiamos about an interracial public art project. With funding from NCAS, the Chicago Public Art Group, and the City of Chicago Neighborhood Arts Program, the project began in September 1993.

All students were invited to participate. Twenty-one students researched symbols and designs from various cultures to create an abstract blend of designs, symbols, and motifs from the various cultural traditions of the students at Steinmetz. Ms. Gude made slide presentations of the designs to every art class in an effort to recruit more participation.

More than 80 students worked for three months creating the many-hued Venetian glass mosaics. Their work space was a basement boiler room, away from the noise and bustle of the school. In this quiet atmosphere, students from many different racial and ethnic communities gradually came to know each other as individuals. They discussed their perceptions of each others' backgrounds and came to understand themselves better as they reflected on each others' words. One student said, "These sessions not only helped us design the mosaic, but also helped us discover the similarities and differences between cultures, and we all realized it is very easy to get along with one another, no matter what our ethnic background."

The school staff's introduction to the idea of the festival came at a staff development session like no other that Steinmetz Academic Center had seen. As the staff entered the meeting room, they were handed "airline tickets" to far-away destinations. The tables were decorated with tablecloths and vivid centerpieces. All around the room, professional-looking decorations caught the staff's attention.

"Wavelength," an improvisational acting troupe, led the staff through a laughter-filled look at themselves and how they viewed each other. Humorous insights into bias and prejudice gently pushed the staff to examine their relationships with others, and what messages they might be giving to students.

The students then took to the stage, hoping to spark interest in the idea of an international festival. As their teachers watched, students constructed the first of three booths for the festival. Following the construction of a castle-inspired European booth, the student Polish Club sang a medley of Polish songs. The construction of the African booth was accompanied by a rhythmic African dance performed by members of the African American Club. Their appearance in tribal African dress drew cheers from the faculty. The "Early School Leavers" constructed a Brazilian Carnival booth, and various Latin dances were performed. Oversized carnival masks were carried by students as they snaked among their wildly applauding teachers to the sounds of a Brazilian samba.

One teacher expressed surprise at the capabilities of students who sat unnoticed in her daily classes: "Their accomplishments in putting together this program told me I had to be involved. If this project motivated them to this degree, I had to find a way to be a part of it."

The teachers were hooked. When members of "Unique Combinations" took the stage to explain how the faculty could be part of the International Festival, they already had a list of enthusiastic volunteers. Other faculty soon thought of ways to include the clubs they sponsored or the classes they taught. One teacher expressed surprise at the capabilities of students who sat unnoticed in her daily classes: "Their accomplishments in putting together this program told me I had to be involved. If this project motivated them to this degree, I had to find a way to be a part of it."

Students and teachers came together like never before to design, plan, and execute the festival. From the drafting classes' designs for the booths to team member Otis Bell's plans for security, everyone found a way to be involved.

During the practice sessions for the entertainment portion, students patiently watched and waited while other groups performed. During these practices, they began to talk to one another and to establish new friendships.

As the festival neared, the Polish Club found itself short one male dance partner. It was too late to recruit another student, and it appeared that one Polish girl would have to drop out. As the choreographer and the students discussed the situation, a Mexican American boy came forward to declare, "I'll dance with her. I learned by watching during practice."

"The reason for my piece was because of my heritage. It's Mexican and Polish. People say it's a weird combination. But when I made that piece, they all said it looked beautiful. I just wanted to prove to people that if you mix different cultures, it makes something beautiful."

"The success that comes from students working together toward a common goal and knowing each other as people can't be replaced."

In another show of support, the African American Club began to worry that the Polish singers were not getting an enthusiastic enough response to their more traditional songs. They made plans to lead the audience in exuberant applause. The night of the performance, with the African American Club leading the way, the Polish singers received a rousing ovation.

The festival opened with the dedication of the student mosaic. Several students publicly expressed their feeling about the mosaic and the process. One boy summed up the mosaic's meaning, "The reason for my piece was because of my heritage. It's Mexican and Polish. People say it's a weird combination. But when I made that piece, they all said it looked beautiful. I just wanted to prove to people that if you mix different cultures, it makes something beautiful." Another student expressed her joy, telling the audience, "It was such a privilege to participate in such an extraordinary project and also working with people of different colors. The thing that amazed me was the way everyone of us had a different idea and it concluded with a beautiful mosaic that represents each and every one of our cultures." After listening to such inspiring words, the crowd was open to learning more about each other's culture as they moved into the food and entertainment areas.

Over 2,000 students and family members squeezed into the Steinmetz halls, sampling food and learning about other cultures. Seventy-five booths provided not only the world's cuisines, but also information, exhibits, and displays. Among the exhibits were Internationalism in Science, Music Around the World, World Literature, and Multiculturalism in Math. Several of the booths presented artifacts from specific cultures or countries. A computer class had a hands-on exhibit of multilingual word processing programs.

For the entertainment part of the evening, nineteen performances representing as many cultures culminated in a Brazilian Carnival number that included all the performers. "There were no catcalls, like you sometimes hear in assemblies. All you could hear was genuine support and admiration," said one teacher.

Looking back, everyone agreed that while the festival was a smash hit, it was the long hours of preparation leading up to it that were the true evidence of its success. This spring, the International Festival was held once again. Why would overworked people create more work? Again and again, they point to the process. "When I see students who under ordinary circumstances would not speak, would be distant, when I see them working together, then I know we're successful," said Principal Kiamos. "The success that comes from students working together toward a common goal and knowing each other as people can't be replaced."

Team Dynamics

The Steinmetz team was very active and cohesive. They began work as soon as they returned to school, despite a teacher strike. The team met weekly, with each member taking on a separate responsibility.

Serving as team leader, Barbara Allocco carried out many of the management functions, taking care of paperwork, finances, and coordination. "Barbara's 'middle person' status was important," said team member Deborah Frankel. "She was the single point of contact and maintained a very professional and organized demeanor."

The team arrived at decisions by consensus. Although the administration modified some decisions, team members seemed to understand the rationale behind the modifications.

Barriers

The Chicago team did not identify any major barriers to successful implementation of the project. They faced the usual difficulties of finding enough time to implement their activities, but, according to one team member, "It was a good experience."

Facilitating Factors

Committed people were the key to Steinmetz's success. According to Principal Kiamos, "Even if they weren't interested, once they saw what was happening, they supported it. The core group work went beyond expectations." Several faculty commented on the commitment and support of the administration.

Another facilitating factor was the LFA Institute.¹ Specifically, team members cited planning time, the planning process, and the motivational aspect.

Staff Attitudes

End-of-year interviews with team members and other faculty members indicated an increase in awareness about intergroup relations. They noted that a core group of faculty members found it difficult to change their attitudes and behaviors, but felt the overall school environment was improved.

1. See description of LFA Institute in Appendix A: Methodology, p. 102.

Beyond the increase in awareness from the many LFA activities, the staff indicated a new excitement about working together. Most attributed this new enthusiasm to the relationships brought about by the festival.

Impact

The project appears to have increased inclusion of issues of intergroup relations in the curriculum and in extracurricular functions. A new and active club, a new tradition, and a new awareness have all continued into a second year.

FACT SHEET

Steinmetz Academic Center
3030 North Mobile
Chicago, IL 60634
(312) 534-3030
Mr. Constantine Kiamos, School Principal

Number of students:	2,400
Grade levels:	9 through 12
Ethnic composition:	35% Hispanic 28% Caucasian 33% African American 4% Asian
Immigrants students:	21%, primarily Polish and Latin American
LFA team members:	Mr. Constantine Kiamos, <i>School Principal</i> Ms. Barbara Allocco, <i>Teacher Representative, Team Leader</i> Ms. Deborah Frankel, <i>Student Support Services Representative</i> Mr. Otis Bell, <i>Teacher</i> Ms. Kay Tokunanga, <i>Assistant Principal</i> Mr. Art Tavardian, <i>Assistant Principal</i> Mr. Michael Altman, <i>Teacher</i>

LFA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. **Youth Motivation Program with Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce:** Steinmetz was visited by 22 business professionals who attended classes to offer career insights, motivate students, and build self-esteem. The speakers were fluent in English, Spanish, and Polish.
 2. **Hispanic American Heritage Month Program:** Ten Latino professionals and role models visited classes to meet with students.
 3. **Student-Created Mosaic:** Students from different cultural backgrounds worked together on this project under the direction of Chicago artist Olivia Gude.
 4. **Communication Meeting for Immigrant Parents:** The meeting was translated into Polish and Spanish. Bilingual programs and other school activities and services were explained. Information regarding preparation for citizenship was distributed.
 5. **Motivation-College Preparation Speakers:** Two Steinmetz graduates, immigrants from Poland presently attending college, gave a presentation to Polish bilingual classes regarding preparation and requirements for college.
 6. **Formation of Multicultural Club:** A multicultural club was organized with a membership of about 40 students. They have held discussions on prejudice, discrimination, and different cultures.
 7. **Prejudice Awareness Classes:** A resource person from the Chicagoland Commission on Human Rights visited a class for one period per week for four weeks to conduct activities based on prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping.
 8. **A World of Difference Prejudice Reduction Workshops for Students:** Workshops were held for 100 students—75 of them ninth graders and 25 members of the Multicultural Club. The facilitators were from the Anti-Defamation League.
 9. **Teacher Training:** A speaker from the Department of Language and Cultural Education gave a presentation on student motivation with an emphasis on bilingual students.
 10. **Black History Month:** Guest speakers from the Chicago Police Department's program "We Care" gave classroom presentations. Some speakers were reformed criminals and drug addicts.
 11. **Naturalization/English Language Classes for Parents:** A naturalization English language class was formed to meet twice a week for two hours from February through May.
-

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12. **Jessie White Tumblers Performance:** The Jessie White Tumblers—students from various Chicago housing projects—performed for the school.

 13. **Exchange Visit with Palatine High School:** The Multicultural Club spent a day at Palatine High School, a Chicago suburban high school.

 14. **Pulaski Day Program:** Two guest speakers—Polish community attorneys—gave presentations to students.

 15. **Self-Esteem Program:** Approximately 400 students in 3 different groups participated in double-period workshops.

 16. **Mini-Fest Assemblies:** A motivational assembly was presented to students featuring dances and songs prepared for the International Festival.

 17. **Polish-Mexican Concert:** Professional singers and musicians were invited to perform songs in Polish, Spanish, and English. The performers wore native costumes. The narration focused on similarities between cultures.

 18. **Asian American Month Program:** Several speakers from the Asian community gave presentations to groups of students. The Asian Club then hosted a lunch for the staff and students.

 19. **International Festival:** Ethnic clubs, departments, teachers, students, parents, and community members prepared exhibits, food booths, and entertainment, representing as many cultures as possible.

 20. **Mosaic Dedication:** The artist, students and teachers involved in the Mosaic project were joined by the administration, staff, students, parents, and community in a dedication ceremony.

 21. **Senior Citizens Program:** A group of students visited the community senior citizens center. The Polish Club performed Polish folk songs and dances.

 22. **Festival Appreciation Party:** An afterschool party featuring music, dancing, refreshments, and festival videos and pictures was sponsored to say "thank you" to those who worked on the International Festival.

 23. **Holocaust/Racism Programs:** Two speakers addressed the students. Fritz Frischall, a survivor of Nazi concentration camp, and Dr. Leon Bass, a witness to racism by the Nazis in Buchwald concentration camp.

 24. **Mosaic II:** Under direction of a local artist, students designed, assembled, and installed mosaics representing multiculturalism.
-

Leadership from the Top



Administrative leadership is crucial to the task of creating opportunities for students from different cultures and backgrounds to work together toward a common goal. In Fargo, North Dakota, the school principal provided strong leadership—setting the tone, organizing the staff, and working with the community.

Thomas Jefferson Elementary School

FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA

Because improving intergroup relations is part of Principal DiCicco's long-range plan for her school, her LFA proposal suggested activities that were not simply one-shot events.

The LFA team sought to create materials and establish school traditions that would last for years to come.

A small stream of immigrants has trickled into Fargo, North Dakota for many years. Recently, however, the flow increased as Lutheran Social Services and the Episcopal Diocese of Fargo began to resettle some 300 refugee families annually in the Fargo area. As a result, the immigrant population has grown and diversified to include Kurds, Armenians, Bosnians, Vietnamese, and Eastern Europeans.

While traditionally there has been little resistance to immigration in Fargo, a group of parents recently approached the school board to protest financial strain they believe immigrants are putting on the community. Naturally, the debate over whether immigrant students are taxing community resources soon overflowed into the school. As Principal Martha DiCicco notes, "There has been more teacher discomfort this year about having immigrant students in their classrooms. This has not been because of the culture of the students, but because teachers have two or three students per class who do not speak or read English on top of already high classloads."

Jefferson Elementary School serves a high percentage of children from low-income households, children with special needs, and young immigrants. Principal DiCicco and her staff try to meet student needs by actively tapping resources in and beyond their community. DiCicco regularly submits proposals for resources to address Jefferson's diversity—among them a proposal to Looking for America.

Because improving intergroup relations is part of DiCicco's long-range plan for her school, her LFA proposal suggested activities that were not simply one-shot events. The LFA team sought to create materials and establish school traditions that would last for years to come.

Within her plan, DiCicco structured teacher activities to give all faculty members a stake in the project. Teachers were invited to participate by joining one of the three culture committees: Vietnamese, Kurdish, or Native American. The committees researched and compiled information on each culture, using parents and community members as guides and resources. Each committee's research culminated in a cultural resource guide and a curriculum available to everybody in the school.

Back in the classroom, teachers shared the knowledge and activities provided in the cultural resource guides. Students benefitted from in-class

DiCicco treated community members as valuable equal partners, developing close working relationships with a number of immigrant parents. There is every indication that parent/community alliances have been strengthened by the project.

talks and demonstrations by local parents, as well as in-class cultural presentations and activities. At Family Science Night and Family Math Night, immigrant students and parents were paired with mainstream students and parents for joint activities. At the end of the school year, an "All Nations Picnic" gave students the chance to see Vietnamese Dragon Dancers as well as Kurdish and Native American Dancers. Chinese New Year and other cultural assemblies rounded out a full year of cultural enrichment.

DiCicco treated community members as valuable equal partners, developing close working relationships with a number of immigrant parents. Concerted efforts to reach out to parents included translating school information into immigrant languages, making home visits to every immigrant student's house, providing transportation to school events, and having translators there as well. There is every indication that parent/community alliances have been strengthened by the project. Parents are more involved in the school. The whole faculty has gained awareness of the area's cultural diversity and has access to it through the resource units. Kurdish and Vietnamese signs remain in the hall, attesting to a genuine adoption of the spirit of diversity.

Throughout the project, DiCicco reached beyond Jefferson and beyond Fargo to find the resources she needed. She established a long-term relationship with the Lutheran Social Services Commission. Her links to local Concordia College brought Dr. Iva Trottier to Jefferson to make a presentation on Native American culture. Working with another school, the LFA team created an alternative report card, spent a year looking nationwide for a Vietnamese typewriter, and utilized AT&T Language Line interpretation services.

DiCicco is a hands-on manager. She made time for the project and, from her position of authority as principal and team leader, she made sure that people followed through on their commitments. Regarding team decision making, she declares, "If no one makes a decision, I'll make one because I can't stand loose ends."

Principal DiCicco's leadership shines through in her ability to use her entire faculty and parent population as resources. As she invited the community into the school, she asked and expected things from them. As she worked to raise staff cultural awareness, she asked and expected things from them, as well. The result at Jefferson was a deeply satisfying experience for all.

Among the durable signs of change are a series of cultural resource books with activities for different grade levels, an All Nations Picnic that has gained the support of the PTA as an annual event, translation of the school manual into immigrant languages, a Vietnamese typewriter, and a variety of cultural materials for the school library.

Team Dynamics

Principal DiCicco chose her team carefully, looking for representative as well as dedicated team members. She chose one community member; one ESL teacher; one Title VII District Manager; one lower elementary teacher; and one higher elementary teacher. She created a team with the capacity to work with many people at many different levels.

Describing the team meetings, team member Verlene Dvoracek says, "Everyone gave their input. It was very democratic and there was a real sharing of ideas. Martha is very organized and pays attention to details." According to team member Tri Phan, the team was very results oriented. "When we thought about the goals and activities we said, 'Who will be responsible for this?' or 'Who will be in charge of that?'"

Barriers

Team members expressed frustration at the large goals and the limited time available to bring faculty members together. Marge Hochgraber thinks the staff may have felt "a little overwhelmed by all the extra responsibilities." Even Principal DiCicco feels the "crowded timeline" of the project created a lot of demands.

Facilitating Factors

Principal DiCicco's commitment and managerial capacity are cited by team members as the most important facilitating factor. "In terms of getting the technical assistance we needed, Martha took care of that," says Dorothy Bruggeman. "Martha ended up doing a lot," states Marge Hochgraber, "Someone has to do the oversight, and she ended up doing it." DiCicco was also not afraid to reach out for assistance from community groups, parents, and outside sources of support.

Staff Attitudes

Tri Phan notes, "The staff are more willing to help. Teachers are willing to do something new." JoAnn Lauwers reports that "teachers have been excited about knowledge gained and services that could be provided."

Asked about the impact on her staff and herself, Principal DiCicco states, "I think we've grown. I think it's been positive. I think it's enjoyable to be aware and conscious of others." Team member Dorothy Bruggeman admits that "one thing that has definitely changed is my own awareness.

"More immigrant parents have shown up at parent-teacher conferences. Teachers will continue to share ideas, and that's been the underpinning for everything."

Before the project, I had not even realized the impact that some of the things that are said can have on people. I didn't even realize the need for sensitivity."

Principal DiCicco believes that the improved awareness of parents and teachers will continue, saying "More immigrant parents have shown up at parent-teacher conferences. I hope the district will pick up the cost of the Language Line. The extra money for 'Home Visit' interpreters will be missed, but the emphasis on multiculturalism within the school will continue. Teachers will continue to share ideas, and that's been the underpinning for everything."

FACT SHEET

Thomas Jefferson Elementary School
315 South 16th Street
Fargo, ND 58103
(701) 241-4763
Martha DiCicco, School Principal

Number of students:	370
Grade levels:	K through 5
Ethnic composition:	80% Caucasian 8% Native American 7% Asian/Pacific 5% Kurdish, Russian, Bosnian, African
Immigrant students:	11%, primarily Kurdish and Vietnamese
LFA team members:	Martha DiCicco, <i>School Principal</i> Tri Phan, <i>Community Leader</i> Dorothy Bruggeman, <i>Elementary Teacher</i> Marge Hochgraber, <i>Elementary Teacher</i> JoAnn Lauwers, <i>ESL Teacher</i> Verlene Dvoracek, <i>Title VII District Manager</i>

LFA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. **Pre-School Staff Development:** A pre-school staff training session took place in August of 1993, before classes began. It opened with a refugee parent speaking in Vietnamese to illustrate how new immigrants may feel when hearing English all day. The LFA team also shared a game called "Culture Race" with the faculty and spoke about the LFA project plan for the upcoming year. Feedback from the faculty was highly positive.
2. **Faculty Culture Committees:** Each committee explored a culture or topic, researched it, found parents and community members to relate their experiences, and identified a speaker to address the entire Jefferson faculty on the subject at an informational presentation.
3. **Classroom Presentations:** In December and January, Vietnamese adults and youth were invited to share their experiences in different classrooms. Classes learned Vietnamese words, numbers, and the alphabet. Films were shown on the plight of the Vietnamese. Visiting artists helped students with Vietnamese art. Vietnamese New Year was celebrated with a traditional meal, Dragon Dancers, and red envelopes. Vietnamese lunar calendars were put up in all rooms and Vietnamese resource materials were displayed in the library.

In February and March, Jefferson focused on Native American culture. Led by a Native American artist, third graders made beaded Christmas ornaments for a Native American Christmas tree at a local museum. All classes visited with a Native American artist who shared information about the way she dries skins and hides to use for beading. The father of a second grader brought his son to school dressed in costume and talked about the meaning and significance of Native American dancing.

In the spring, Kurdish Culture was studied in-depth. Due to the newness of the community to both Fargo and the United States, resource material was scarce. Nonetheless, Kurdish mothers came to bake bread with children in kindergarten and first grade classrooms. Kurdish storytelling and dancing was done in the Assembly hall. And a Kurdish "Word of the Day" was broadcast every morning over the school loudspeakers.

4. **Hallway Cultural Exhibits:** Displays of Vietnamese, Kurdish, and Native American food, clothing, photos, and artifacts were set up in the Jefferson Hallways.
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5. **AT&T Language Line Translation Services:** To meet their interpretation needs, Jefferson subscribed to AT&T's Language Line, an over-the-phone interpretation service. Jefferson faculty and administration were very impressed with the professional level of service they received on the Language Line. Although a Kurdish interpreter had to be scheduled, Vietnamese interpreters were always available. Throughout the year and despite the cost, Jefferson continued to use the Language Line to ask questions and get answers.
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6. **Home Visits:** Home visits were made throughout the year as new immigrant families arrived in Fargo. Parents were very appreciative of and impressed by teachers coming to their homes. Teachers reported being more aware of immigrants' home situations and felt it would now be easier to communicate.
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7. **Family Outings:** To bring both resident and immigrant parents together, Jefferson hosted a series of family events open and advertised to all. Family Science Night was held in the fall. In February, the Skateland Family Night Out was held for all students, parents, and staff. In March, Family Math Night was arranged for students and their families. Resident and immigrant families were paired to participate in activities together. In the spring, Jefferson helped to fund the showing of a Kurdish movie with English subtitles at a local theater.
-
8. **All Nations Picnic:** The relationships established through the work of the three culture committees culminated in the All Nations Picnic in the spring. The picnic was an end-of-year celebration of multiculturalism at Jefferson, open to all children and families in the school. The picnic had games, food (including many ethnic dishes) and Native American, Kurdish, Vietnamese, and western dancing displays.
-
9. **Alternative Report Card/Checklist for Newcomer Students:**
The LFA team developed a checklist/reporting form that emphasized the individual progress of students in three areas: communication; work habits and personal growth; and reading.
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Forging Community Linkages



Parents and teachers point to the difficulty of creating opportunities for diverse students to work together toward a common goal when surrounding neighborhoods are undergoing rapid economic and demographic change. With guidance from its principal, Lee High School in Houston connected with the local community to embrace change as an asset.

Robert E. Lee Senior High School

HOUSTON, TEXAS

Students from Robert E. Lee High, a large urban high school in the Gulfton neighborhood of Houston, have historically come from White upper-middle-class families in the surrounding communities. With the downturn in the Houston economy in the 1980s, many unemployed office workers and their families moved out of Gulfton. Immigrant families, displaced by economic and political problems in Central America, moved in to replace them. In many neighborhoods around the school, the population shifted from over 80 percent Caucasian in 1980 to over 50 percent Hispanic in 1990.

Consequently, Lee has undergone rapid transition to a predominantly Hispanic school. In 1980, the student body was 80 percent Caucasian; by 1992, the school population was 53 percent Hispanic, 27 percent Caucasian, and 15 percent African American. By the end of that same school year, the Hispanic population had increased to nearly 60 percent, with Limited English Proficient students approaching 50 percent.

Despite the change in the student body, students at Lee remained largely segregated by race and ethnicity as the result of school tracking patterns. "High mobility and lack of bilingual skills have placed most immigrants in ESL whether they need to be there or not," noted the writers of Lee's LFA proposal. "Most African American students do not feel comfortable in advanced classes, so they make up the bulk of regular students. The White students go into advanced tracks, so no group ever has any contact with the others."

White parents have retained control of the PTO and remain very active in school policy making. In describing the PTO, Lee's initial proposal stated: "The PTO does not recognize the new parents as valuable to the school or community." One staff member elaborated, "As the community and student body swiftly changed, a large portion of the school staff and community failed to acknowledge these changes. When they did not openly accept change, they began to passively resist it." Such resistance continues. Principal Claypool notes, "The president of the PTO this year is a Chicano lawyer, Mario Vasquez, and many parents are uneasy about him."

In contrast to Lee's White parents, most immigrant parents are poor, speak very little English, are not citizens, and work two or more jobs at less than minimum wages. They are mostly Central Americans from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras who are new to both the United States and the neighborhood. Many parents have little time to participate in school affairs.

Many are intimidated by school officials. Embarrassed by their poor English, they are reluctant to attend school meetings.

James Claypool has been the principal of Lee High School for three years. Upon assuming his responsibilities at Lee, Claypool saw the immediate imbalance of academic opportunity between the White and Hispanic communities. He recognized that without participation from immigrant Latino parents in Gulfton, there would never be a sense of understanding, respect, and parity between the two communities within the school. He took a number of steps designed to draw the Gulfton Latino community into the decision making process at Lee High School.

"Many of the White kids had chips on their shoulders because they were in advanced classes. That was taken away from them and they got angry. But after the initial shock, I think things are better. Kids feel more comfortable with each other now that they're wholly integrated. The institution is telling them it's okay to get along with each other."

In an effort to "detrack" Lee's classrooms, Principal Claypool eliminated the advanced college preparation courses from the curriculum, resulting in more integrated classes. "Many of the White kids had chips on their shoulders because they were in advanced classes," states Claypool. "That was taken away from them and they got angry. But after the initial shock, I think things are better. Kids feel more comfortable with each other now that they're wholly integrated. The institution is telling them it's okay to get along with each other."

The Hispanic Advisory Council was established during the spring semester of 1993 to address the specific needs of the Latino parents and Latino community at Lee. The members of this council represent not only faculty and administration but various other sectors of the community as well, including the community-based organization Gulfton Area Neighborhood Organization (GANO) that works on issues affecting the immigrant community, such as drugs and gangs. Claypool sponsored a number of GANO-led presentations for immigrant parents at the high school on these issues, helping to connect the school to the adult immigrant community.

The principal, working with GANO, has instituted community forums once per semester at local middle and elementary schools as well as at the high school. The idea behind the meetings is to introduce the community to the school. As Principal Claypool says, "We can't wait for Hispanic parents to come to us. We must go to them." GANO provided professional speakers to educate parents on specific topics such as immigration and legal rights, offering parents a forum to air their opinions and problems.

These forums have been well received by the community as evidenced by the enthusiasm of the parents and their steady attendance. Correspondingly, significant progress has been made on drug and gang activity in the school. "This school year," Principal Claypool proudly reports, "we had a reduction of discipline problems by 30 percent to 50 percent." One gang, the Cholos, has been virtually eliminated from the Lee campus. Because of such successful community-oriented efforts, parents have come to view the school and its administration as a positive force.

"We can't wait for Hispanic parents to come to us. We must go to them. We must recognize the value of Hispanic community leadership. Leadership is going to come from community activists and community leaders."

Community forums brought out the need to hold separate PTO meetings for immigrant parents in Spanish. PTO meetings with translators had become too long and intimidating for immigrant parents. In December, open forums were held for parents, one in English and one in Spanish. Among some English-speaking parents, this measure was resented as a sign of "catering" to the immigrant community.

When working with GANO and other organizations, Claypool tells his staff and the PTO, "We must recognize the value of Hispanic community leadership. Leadership is going to come from community activists and community leaders." He has encouraged Francisco Lopez of GANO to join the PTO board of Lee High School. For these attempts to involve the Latino community, he has faced harsh criticism and strenuous resistance from some members of the PTO and the community at large.

Despite resistance, Principal Claypool moved forward with his vision of community inclusion through the Looking for America project by incorporating immigrant parents and students into mainstream school life while increasing awareness among White staff, students, and parents of the importance of respecting and understanding Gulfton's newcomer population.

The LFA team created activities that simultaneously targeted parents, teachers, and students. While some of the activities encountered resistance and others were slow to get off the ground, all activities benefitted from firm administrative support.

The work of the Hispanic Advisory Council was continued through a Parent Education Program and a series of training sessions offered to immigrant parents called *Padres con Poder*. The Parent Education Program presented immigrant parents with information vital to daily life in the U.S. *Padres Con Poder* was a series of workshops designed to help immigrant parents communicate with their rapidly "Americanizing" children. Both offerings were enthusiastically received. In the wake of the training, the parents decided to form a group of their own.

The LFA team tried multiple approaches to improve relations among students. Students went to Prejudice Reduction Workshops sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews. "Attendance was 100 percent at the workshops. It was well accepted even by White students. Students became more aware about how they felt about themselves and others. They learned how to accept others as different and similar," states Olivia Varela.

The team reached for long-term impact by designing a fully integrated multicultural curriculum for ninth grade English. The English Department ordered a complete set of text books to complement the new curriculum. In addition, an elective course was offered during the LFA year on the History of the Americas.

Throughout the year, the administration kept applying pressure to increase participation of immigrant students in student organizations and student government. As a result, a number of clubs with class- or gender-based membership became open to all. In addition, for the first time ever, schoolwide elections produced a "highly immigrant" student council, and immigrant students now hold important student government offices.

Despite success with students, the LFA team encountered a great deal of resistance when they tried to engage the staff in prejudice reduction workshops. "A lot of people felt it was being shoved down their throat," notes Michael Matlock. "They went in hostile and ready to unload. You have to be subversive with teachers. Next time, I don't think we should call it 'sensitivity training.'"

"Some staff are really resistant to this issue. Their attitude is 'There's nothing wrong with me,'" reports Claypool. "But I also think teachers haven't been so positive about it because staff development has been nonexistent in the past. That is changing."

Perhaps more than his LFA team, Principal Claypool is stubbornly optimistic that staff development sessions and workshops can accomplish something. "Every day teachers seem to get better attitudes," he says. "For next semester, I asked them what they wanted. Teachers asked for information on gangs, how to motivate kids, and on discipline. We've been sharing information more. The teachers are more productive and happier."

Claypool's optimistic and inclusive attitude kept the LFA project afloat. In the midst of rivalries over pet projects, bureaucratic obstacles, and community and staff resistance, a community-based vision of inclusion produced a common goal. All along, the principal's steady commitment to reform helped the team and the school to keep its priorities within sight.

"Every day teachers seem to get better attitudes. For next semester, I asked them what they wanted. Teachers asked for information on gangs, how to motivate kids, and on discipline. We've been sharing information more. The teachers are more productive and happier."

Team Dynamics

An interesting dispute over how to spend the LFA project money began between two LFA team members. One felt LFA's main priority should be money for multicultural books for the general school population, while a second thought money would be better spent on immigrant parent and student outreach programs. Each disagreed with the other's priorities, but because of a common sense of school purpose and vision, the team was able to compromise. The administration and the team both agreed that in an environment such as Lee's, empowerment of the immigrant community must take place simultaneously with expanding the awareness of White students. Therefore, the funding was divided between books for the students and outreach programs for students and parents.

Barriers

The largest obstacle the LFA team faced was strong resistance from some White parents, some students, and some faculty to integrated classrooms, organizations, and activities. Even at the end of the LFA year, Mary Ann Mitchell notes, "There are still a lot of teachers who don't want us promoting it." The same remains true of some White parents. Immigrant parents, although now participating in the PTO, could still be better represented.

Facilitating Factors

Practically all LFA team members identified the LFA Institute¹ as the single most important facilitating factor for project success. As noted by Michael Matlock, "The instruction was good. It provided us with a good opportunity to set up goals and programs and develop a strong working relationship. I also liked the opportunity to interact with teams from other schools in other cities."

Technical assistance and support from the LFA project was the other factor mentioned as critical to sustaining the momentum of the project.

Staff Attitudes

The teaching staff is divided into a contingent of young teachers and a majority of older teachers, many of whom do not understand the full range of needs of the new immigrant population. Staff development workshops on prejudice reduction and cultural sensitivity throughout the LFA year elicited comments of resentment and hostility to the idea of cultural sensitivity and difference. Many teachers stated that they "didn't have a prejudice problem" while others openly mocked the idea of cultural sensitivity.

"It opened up a big awareness about prejudice and discrimination among teachers," says Jennifer Alexander. "Some teachers were even making fun of special education students and their teachers. The split was put out in the open. It was not unifying."

Impact

Team leader Mary Ann Mitchell comments, "This project was a real eye-opener. It gave us the push to start addressing a problem we knew was there. This made us move. It gave us a jumpstart."

1. See description of LFA Institute in Appendix A: Methodology, p. 102.

FACT SHEET

Robert E. Lee Senior High School
6529 Beverly Hill Lane
Houston, TX 77057-6499
(713) 782-7310
James Claypool, School Principal

Number of students:	2,455
Grade levels:	9 through 12
Ethnic composition:	53% Hispanic 27% Caucasian 15% African American 5% Asian
Immigrant students:	41% LEP 22% ESL, primarily Central American
LFA team members:	Michael Matlock, <i>English Teacher</i> Jennifer Alexander, <i>ESL Teacher</i> Beth Bogan, <i>Guidance Counselor</i> Olivia Varela, <i>Guidance Counselor</i> Mary Ann Mitchell, <i>Team Leader and</i> <i>Student Support Services Representative</i> Francisco Lopez, <i>Community Organization</i> <i>Representative</i>

LFA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. **Student Prejudice Reduction Workshops:** In the fall, NCCJ provided workshops to students on leadership and prejudice reduction. The workshops were offered four times each semester and reached 50 to 60 students per workshop. Training continued throughout the winter into the spring. Student response was reported as overwhelmingly positive.
 2. **Multicultural Ninth Grade English Text Books:** The English Department designed a fully integrated multicultural curriculum in the ninth grade. The department also purchased the ninth grade text book "Responding to Literature: Multicultural Perspectives" to supplement current texts. The new book focuses on multicultural literature to provide balance to ninth grade English's overview of literature.
 3. **Multicultural Mural:** In the spring, a design contest was initiated for a multicultural mural. Students submitted designs to a committee that selected the winning design. Four students worked on the mural with a professional artist. The mural was completed at the end of May, despite busy student schedules.
 4. **Parent Education Program:** The Parent Education Program promotes the school as a positive force in family life and encourages families to participate in school functions. The project built upon ESL adult courses and parent involvement meetings already established at Lee. Resources provided to parents and family members include ESL classes, levels I and II, and information to help parents understand how to access school services.
 5. **Padres con Poder:** The Padres con Poder program was composed of parent and student workshops on ways that immigrant parents can become more involved in the lives and school experiences of their children. The workshop featured trained personnel and included videos, handouts, food, and overhead transparencies. In the wake of the presentations and training, immigrant parents decided to form a group to address their needs.
 6. **Home Visits:** The school hired a community liaison to visit homes of immigrant families to establish personal contact with the school.
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7. **Teacher Prejudice Reduction Workshops:** Working with Region IV and the NCCJ, teachers attended a series of staff development sessions in prejudice reduction, teaching strategies, learning styles, cultural learning, interdisciplinary teaching projects, multicultural curriculum development and implementation.
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8. **Teacher's Multicultural Literature Club:** In the fall of 1993, a multicultural literature study group for school staff was started. Each month, club members read a different novel and discussed its content and relevance to the students and the classroom. By that spring, the club involved 45 teachers representing all teaching subjects.
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Can the Best Be Better?

Belmont High School in Los Angeles has a strong reputation for providing quality services to all of its students. But good services do not necessarily translate into good intergroup relations. By providing the chance for students from diverse backgrounds to work together toward a common goal, even the best could be better.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Belmont High School

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Belmont High School is located in the Echo Park section of Los Angeles, just blocks from the granite and glass towers of the downtown financial district. A longstanding Mexican American neighborhood, Echo Park has recently seen immigrants from all parts of Central and South America settle in its midst. While there is extensive gang activity in the community, it has not yet spilled over into the school. Principal Auggie Herrera describes Belmont's relationship with the gangs as one of mutual respect, "The 18th Streeters know the rules. They respect us. We respect them. We work hard at keeping things together."

Principal Herrera describes the student body as "countless numbers of kids struggling to make something of themselves in this very fluid community." Sixty-six percent of the students are immigrants. Most of the remaining 34 percent are second-generation Americans. The student body is 82 percent Hispanic. While the majority are Mexican American or Central American, virtually every Spanish-speaking country in the world is represented at Belmont. The 10 percent Asian population is also diverse, including a significant Filipino population.

Despite its inner-city locale, most teachers at this downtown Los Angeles school are there because they want to be. They are happy to be in a well-run school with a strong commitment to students. Teacher turnover is low. Many of the younger teachers, including team members Edwin Galan and Robert Bautista, attended Belmont in their youth and have come back to teach.

Factors such as late entry, high mobility, and limited English skills present academic challenges for many immigrant students at Belmont High. In response, many teachers focus on academic skills to the exclusion of nonacademic problems, such as relations among student groups. Team member and counselor Ella Roberts points out that some teachers are very single-minded in their teaching, "They feel that academics is what matters and the rest is a bunch of touchy-feely stuff."

At the LFA Institute, Assistant Principal Rosa Morley expressed concern that teachers "bury students' nonacademic problems if they are not violent and not conflict-based." She spoke for the whole team, noting, "The different student groups ignore each other. Because Belmont is a point-of-entry, students are not acclimated enough to think any of them have dominance. But they are afraid to reach out—because of fear, out of ignorance, and out of stereotyping. They don't even reach out to each other."

"The different student groups ignore each other. They are afraid to reach out—because of fear, out of ignorance, and out of stereotyping. They don't even reach out to each other. It's important for them to be part of the community. We need to help them see beyond school."

It's important for them to be part of the community. We need to help them see beyond school."

The team also agreed that teacher behavior, though well intentioned, could use some improvement. To broach this topic with faculty, the team planned a one-day staff training session to kick off the LFA school year, followed by professional development luncheons each month.

Because the school is on a year-round schedule, the team was concerned that the kick-off session would not be well attended. But the session, presented by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, was a success. Teachers were led through various intergroup relations exercises by well-trained experts. Good attendance, active participation, and enthusiastic evaluations and comments buoyed the team. They held high expectations as they moved into the next round of activities.

The first follow-up session was not well attended. But the team's disappointment was short lived, since other activities were keeping them busy. A major earthquake had also set back the entire school schedule. However, when the second session was poorly attended, the team concluded that some added incentives would be necessary to improve attendance. Assistant Principal Sherryl Broyles made a promising suggestion—teachers who attended the training sessions would be eligible to apply for a minigrant of up to \$150 to be used for activities promoting positive student relations. To inspire teachers to work together, teachers would have to apply as a team.

The response was strong. The team received over 175 responses as attendance at monthly seminars skyrocketed to more than 50 teachers per session, reinforcing the interactive aspect of the training exercises. Teachers who had never spoken to each other devoted these working lunches to discussion of substantive issues, creating many new relationships.

Minigrant activities were creative and relevant. One team designed a literature unit around the theme of intergroup relations. Another team sponsored a Cinco de Mayo celebration around the theme of liberation to allow students from all ethnic and racial backgrounds to relate to the holiday. An Asian cultural celebration was developed by an African American teacher. A group of Asian, Latino, and African American students visited the African American Museum and Exhibit Hall where they met the King of Uganda.

Team member Olivia Sanchez Brown received a grant to stage an art exhibit as an opportunity to showcase community and student artists. Working with students and volunteers, she transformed a vacant wood-working shop at the school into a gallery whose light, space, and mood rivaled that of any downtown Los Angeles facility. Opening night drew important figures from the Los Angeles art world as well as parents, students, and community members. The gallery remained open during

"When people are thinking what they can't do, it's hard to get them to think about what they can do. We just showed them what they could do."

nutrition and lunch periods. Responding to questions about how she was able to mount such a successful effort, Ms. Brown says, "When people are thinking what they can't do, it's hard to get them to think about what they can do. We just showed them what they could do."

The minigrants had a particularly strong impact on faculty interaction. According to the team, new relationships were formed, even among people who had previously seemed cliquish. Sherryl Broyles comments, "Faculty were able to look at each other through different glasses. The seeds that were planted will continue to bring forth fruit in the years to come."

Evaluating the project, Rosa Morley cites new interest in relations among student groups at Belmont High. "It gave teachers a chance to focus on students and their perceptions, in addition to the academic problems they had previously seen as more real and more pressing." Ella Roberts concludes, "LFA fits into the spirit of Belmont High School. Even so, much of it is just a drop in the bucket that you hope ripples."

Team Dynamics

"The leadership team was diverse in every aspect and that diversity can create organic qualities. We have very disparate groups here. We appreciated each other's input and learned to accommodate each other. As a result, we hit it off as a team and we worked together to put together a good plan that we saw to fruition."

While Belmont's LFA team members were generally "diverse, responsible, and very supportive of each other," the school's three-track system often hampered cooperation, leaving team members to work independently from each other. As team leader Rosa Morley noted during the project, "The team is very active, not so much collectively, but individually. Because we have a year-round schedule, we are not always together to implement activities. We meet after school once or twice a month, but there may be different people there depending on the track."

"The members we picked are very responsible and involved. We talk to each other often. We have lots of perspectives here, based on age, experience, and backgrounds," says Sherryl Broyles. Ella Roberts adds, "The leadership team was diverse in every aspect and that diversity can create organic qualities. We have very disparate groups here. We appreciated each other's input and learned to accommodate each other. As a result, we hit it off as a team and we worked together to put together a good plan that we saw to fruition."

Edwin Galan says he wished there had been more time to meet, but "everybody had other responsibilities." In the final analysis, Robert Bautista points out, "We were active. That can be seen in the fact that we did accomplish a lot of what we set out to do."

Barriers

Few barriers were reported by this team, which seemed intrinsically to understand the significance of the project. All members mentioned the three-track school year, which meant that only two-thirds of teachers, team members, and students were available at any one time. As a result, the team was never able to work together on a single, schoolwide project.

Other barriers mentioned were the one-year life span of the project and the earthquake in March, which all agreed was a "major disruption." Neighborhood safety concerns were also mentioned in regard to afterschool events for parents.

Facilitating Factors

The most important facilitating factor listed by all team members was attendance at the LFA Institute.¹ "At first I thought the need for bonding was superfluous. But about halfway through the training, I recognized just how valuable it was going to be," says Rosa Morley. Edwin Galan notes, "The trip to Boston provided a good incentive. It's hard to be attracted to projects where you are told what to do. In Boston, we made our own plans as a team. It really helped me feel more comfortable with the project."

Another facilitating factor was the diversity of the teacher and student populations. Robert Bautista likes having large numbers of different ethnic groups to work with. Rosa Morley points out, "We are all immigrants here. No one feels empowered enough to feel superior to another."

Staff Attitudes

As at many schools, there is a schism between older staff and younger staff at Belmont High. "About one-third of the teachers get excited about a project like this, another third are ambivalent, and one-third are just not interested," says Ella Roberts. Rosa Morley concurs: "Some teachers want no part of this project. They would rather just read about it."

There is a contingent of younger teachers at Belmont, many of whom grew up in the neighborhood and attended Belmont High themselves. "These teachers have a close attachment to the school and to the neighborhood. Their attitude tends to be, 'Of course we should be doing these things.'"

1. See description of LFA Institute in Appendix A: Methodology, p. 102.

"I've had at least three occasions where students have reported racist comments made by teachers. I have suggested to these teachers that they speak to someone who has attended one of our staff workshops on intergroup relations. Most have come back and said they saw the issue in a whole new way."

Sherryl Broyles points out, "I've had at least three occasions where students have reported racist comments made by teachers. I have suggested to these teachers that they speak to someone who has attended one of our staff workshops on intergroup relations. Most have come back and said they saw the issue in a whole new way. The students come back to me on occasion to say 'What did you do to him?'"

Team members agree that staff development workshops on intergroup relations have definitely helped "bring teachers together." Team member Edwin Galan notes the impact that the workshops had on him: "The seminars really helped me. I've made an effort to talk to others and be friendlier. I've become more comfortable with my colleagues. Some teachers were shocked at their own behavior. Many were awakened and have asked me when there will be another one." Rosa Morley notes, "The workshops brought about a certain interest in intergroup relations. It gave people a chance to focus on students and their perceptions, which many teachers didn't consider 'real problems' before."

Impact

Team members at Belmont High agreed that the Looking for America project will continue in spirit after this year, if not exactly in content. "I think we started something among teachers," says Edwin Galan. "The minigrants, the staff development workshops, and Sports Night. I think all that will continue." Ella Roberts is a little more circumspect: "It will continue in the form of awareness and understanding, although we can't do the same activities without the funding." Principal Herrera sounded an upbeat note: "I think this project will last beyond this year. The grants turned some people on. And, after all, this kind of project is what Belmont High is all about."

FACT SHEET

Belmont High School
1575 West Second Street
Los Angeles, CA 90026
(213) 250-0244
Auggie Herrera, School Principal

Number of Students:	4,300
Grade levels:	9 through 12
Ethnic composition:	82% Hispanic 10% Asian 6% Filipino 1% African American 0.9% Caucasian, and 0.1% Native American
Immigrant students:	66% LEP 33% non-English-speaking, primarily Mexican American, Central American, Asian
LFA team members:	Rosa Morley, <i>Assistant Principal, Team Leader</i> Sherryl Broyles, <i>Assistant Principal</i> Ella Roberts, <i>Guidance Counselor</i> Edwin Galan, <i>Math Teacher</i> Olivia Sanchez Brown, <i>Art Teacher</i> Robert Bautista, <i>Teacher, Health, English, Spanish, and Football and Basketball coach</i>

LFA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. **Latino/African American Youth Summit:** As a result of the LFA grant, Belmont High School was able to send five Black and five Latino students to a Latino/African Youth Summit that began as an outgrowth of the LA riots. As part of the summit, participating students are expected to engage in community development projects during the year.
 2. **Student Video:** Students from Belmont's ninth grade Humanitas (English, Social Studies, Geography) classes made videos on topics of their choice. Belmont's Humanitas class is open to all Belmont students regardless of academic standing. The theme of the class this year is "Living in a Global Community."
 3. **Bilingual Poetry Reading:** Two poets, one Mexican American and one a Salvadoran immigrant, gave bilingual poetry readings to five classes at Belmont. Both poets have been published, are well-known in the community, and are advocates for better understanding between multicultural groups.
 4. **Field Trip to UCLA Cultural History Museum:** Fifty-two students visited the Fowler Museum at UCLA that specializes in non-European cultural history. Students visited an exhibition of the pre-Inca Moche Civilization. The participating teacher took a four-week training course offered by the Museum. Students also made a banner about the Moche civilization.
 5. **A Place Called Home:** The ninth grade Humanitas classes performed "A Place Called Home" with the Los Angeles Music Center's opera singers and four professional musicians before half of the student body. The opera documents the story of four young political refugee immigrants.
 6. **Cultural Assemblies:** Students put on performances in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Chinese New Year, and Cinco de Mayo.
 7. **Staff Development:** The LFA team held monthly forums to discuss intergroup relations. Discussions ranged from simple exchanges of opinion to curriculum development to activities planning. Each forum was evaluated by those attending.
 8. **Minigrants:** Teachers attending the monthly forums were invited to apply for modest minigrants to support multicultural or intergroup activities in their curriculum.
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Invisible Walls



LFA teams identified prejudice, community traditions, and local politics as barriers to the task of establishing positive opportunities for students from different cultures to work together toward common goals. No one anticipated how often bureaucratic obstacles would keep projects from going forward. The story of the community garden at Cooke Middle School in Philadelphia symbolizes the invisible walls that resist change.

Jay Cooke Middle School

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Jay Cooke Middle School is located in the Logan neighborhood of north Philadelphia. The main building sits amid deteriorating row houses, occupying an entire city block. In September 1993, overcrowding in school led the district to add an annex one mile away from the main school building in an old Catholic school building just off Broad Street, Philadelphia's longest north-to-south street.

Over the last two decades, this once largely German community has become dominated by African Americans. In the past decade, refugees from Southeast Asia have moved in, causing the Jay Cooke Middle School to have a student population that is 76 percent African American and 19 percent Asian. Despite their proximity, the two groups do not interact in any positive way. When asked if they played together, one African American student says, "No. Because I don't talk to them and they don't talk to me."

"They talk about how the Chinese and Vietnamese are living in houses with a hundred people, but they're not from our country. If you come to America and you're just starting out, it's hard. I'm Black and I might go to Paris and think the people in Paris are talking about me. It's hard when we come into somebody else's country."

Some African American students struggle with Asian behavior that seems unusual to them. Some students express sensitivity to challenges faced by immigrants, while others do not understand why immigrants live as they do. One says, "Where I live there's a lot of Black people, but then up the street there's this little thing I call a village where there's a hundred people in each house. They cook out in the window." Another student counters, "They talk about how the Chinese and Vietnamese are living in houses with a hundred people, but they're not from our country. If you come to America and you're just starting out, it's hard. I'm Black and I might go to Paris and think the people in Paris are talking about me. It's hard when we come into somebody else's country."

Ethel Frisby, the school's community coordinator and LFA team member, has lived in the Logan neighborhood all her life. She remembers when the brownstones surrounding Jay Cooke Middle School were known for their daffodils and irises and how green the lawns were in the summer in contrast to the rusting automobiles and old mattresses that now litter the neighborhood. Team member Shouben Li came to the Logan neighborhood from China. One special connection he keeps to his homeland is the Chinese vegetables he grows in his home garden as a way of relaxing after long hours of teaching ESL.

As Frisby and Li pondered plans for Cooke Middle School with the rest of the team, the idea of a community garden came to life. As they pictured Cambodian and African American students working together to beautify

their neighborhood, they believed this would provide a vital opportunity for interaction between the immigrants and U.S.-born children.

Although there are no discernable Cambodian or African American sections of the neighborhood and children live next door or across the street from families of different backgrounds, students tend to "stick with their own kind" at school. Because students in ESL classes are scheduled together throughout the day, there are few opportunities for them to get to know their African American classmates. Even when students are integrated into the same instructional settings, language barriers keep them from interacting. The team agreed enthusiastically that a project such as a community garden could bring students together through a common goal. The nature of a gardening project seemed the perfect way for students to begin to know each other as peers. Clearing the land, planting seeds, and tending the colorful outcome would be a common goal on which to build communication and mutual respect.

Students often spoke of their parents as sources of racial prejudice who interacted with each other even less than the children. The garden project would not only bring beauty to the decaying neighborhood but also would involve parents, like their children, in a meaningful, shared activity leading to a shared goal.

Students often spoke of their parents as sources of racial prejudice who interacted with each other even less than the children. Team members could see two enticements to draw parents into the garden project. It would bring beauty to the decaying neighborhood by replacing junk-laden vacant lots with new gardens, and, once involved, parents, like their children, would be engaged in a meaningful, shared activity leading to a shared goal. The team speculated that it would be natural for parents to begin to know each other as individuals rather than as members of ethnic or racial groups.

As team members began to plan, Frisby and Li, with their expertise and interest, seemed to be the natural supervisors. Money for garden tools was set aside in the project budget. Strategies were developed to inform and involve the community. Ethel, as a longtime neighborhood resident, identified key community leaders who could inspire others to participate. Tremel Lashner, a block captain in the neighborhood organization, surfaced as an important contact. With a deep love for both the neighborhood and for gardening, she also had influence with the city political system, and people in the neighborhood listened to her.

Upon their return from Boston, the team attended a meeting of the Logan Neighborhood Association to present their idea of creating community gardens as a source of beautification, safety, and social interaction. The association responded enthusiastically. When someone pointed out that abandoned properties could be purchased from the city for one dollar, the association agreed that it would purchase a lot for the project.

A search of the properties available under the one-dollar program yielded none in the Logan neighborhood. The team became more discouraged as Ms. Frisby and Ms. Lashner looked up vacant lots in the city registries and found them tied up in litigation or owned by distant absentee

landlords or anonymous corporations. In any case, they were unavailable. Time was passing and the planting season was coming to an end.

Despite the roadblocks, the team persisted. Ms. Lashner volunteered her own yard as a site for a scaled-down garden that students and parents could use. Expectations rose again, only to be dashed when the team received information that an insurance policy was necessary for the students to work in Ms. Lashner's yard that neither the school, the Neighborhood Association, nor Ms. Lashner could afford.

Undaunted, almost as a defiant gesture against bureaucratic barricades, Ms. Frisby and Mr. Li purchased gardening tools and, with a small group of students, planted iris bulbs in a patch of land adjacent to the school. When spring came, the irises began to grow.

One could be hopeful and characterize the new growth as a symbol of a breakthrough against cumbersome bureaucracies. But how does one characterize the symbol of school district maintenance workers mowing the irises down a few days later?

Team Dynamics

A general discord between administration and faculty contributed to the team being split on the question of whether they worked well together. "When the administration was not at meetings, there was more energy and we were more focused."

The team was split on the question of whether they worked well together. Half felt that too few were sufficiently involved in either decision making or carrying out project activities. The other half expressed a belief that everyone on the team was active and interested.

Contributing to the split was a general discord between administration and faculty. The same team members who expressed dissatisfaction with other team members also had differences with the administration. One team member states, "When the administration was not at meetings, there was more energy and we were more focused."

Despite disagreement over involvement and other team dynamics, the Cooke team believed in their goal of improving relations between Asian and African American students. They also reported little difficulty making decisions by consensus. However, some team members expressed dismay that many of their decisions were overturned by the administration. One team member notes that "everything we decided in Boston was changed when we got back here."

Barriers

Management factors, including bureaucratic processes and communication, were the main barriers to successful implementation of the Philadelphia project. The team complained that the school district's financial management was cumbersome and that team members were inexperienced in procedures for approval of specific activities or for requesting money to

Poor communication between the team and the school administration compounded the lack of information about appropriate management procedures.

implement activities. Poor communication between the team and the school administration compounded the lack of information about appropriate management procedures. The result was delay and significant modifications of activities. Team members agree that their enthusiasm began to wane as they encountered bureaucratic problems.

The school annex presented another barrier. With many of the students—including ESL students—a mile away, it was difficult to implement activities that called for interaction between students.

Facilitating Factors

Team members cited the LFA Institute¹ as a strong facilitating factor. All said they returned from the Institute enthusiastic and ready to begin. They appreciated the time to plan and the opportunity to hear ideas from other participants.

Staff Attitudes

Due to preoccupation with management problems, the team was unable to involve other school staff to any significant degree. The team reported the beginnings of communication about race and bias among teachers at one of the staff development sessions, but poor follow-up allowed awareness to return to a low level.

Several individuals reported that low morale at Cooke had a negative effect on project participation. "It made us not want to put out any extra effort," reports one team member.

Impact

When immigrant students and U.S.-born students were together during LFA activities, there was a cordial and harmonious atmosphere. The project provided the only opportunities for intergroup relations to be practiced. It appears that some LFA activities will be continued by individual team members, but there will be no schoolwide effort to continue any of the activities.

Despite an overall sense that the project could have been more successful, team member Peggy Ream remains hopeful. She states, "Be open to everything because there is so much that can be done. Kids can lead the way. There is so much out there we can give each other. Within that sharing there are similarities. Within differences we find similarities."

1. See description of LFA Institute in Appendix A: Methodology, p. 102.

FACT SHEET

Jay Cooke Middle School
13th and Loudon Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19141
(215) 456-3002
Dr. Craig C. Browne, School Principal

Number of students:	1,200
Grade levels:	Middle School
Ethnic composition:	76% African American 19% Asian 4% Hispanic 1% Caucasian 0.1% Native American
Immigrant students:	20%, primarily Cambodian and Vietnamese
LFA team members:	Mr. Ed Dicenzo, <i>Union Representative</i> Ms. Mary Faherty, <i>Fifth Grade Teacher</i> Ms. Ethel Frisby, <i>School Community Coordinator</i> Mr. Shouben Li, <i>ESOL Teacher</i> Ms. Peggy Ream, <i>Fifth Grade Teacher</i> Ms. Pat Roberts, <i>ESOL Teacher</i>

LFA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. ESL students were paired with students in other classes to facilitate interaction. Several field trips were arranged for ESL students and their partners, including visits to:
 - Linville Orchards
 - Academy of Natural Sciences
 - Franklin Institute
 - African American Museum
 - Burholme Park
 2. Paired students visited Fellowship Farms where they participated in structured activities encouraging good intergroup relations and prejudice reduction. The activities were conducted by trained staff.
 3. Two paired classes worked on science projects together.
 4. Paired students wrote letters to each other about their shared experiences.
 5. The Philadelphia team developed two assembly programs to expose students to different cultures:
 - A Kung Fu performance to teach the value of discipline and persistence. The group included individuals from many different cultural backgrounds.
 - A Japanese dance performance offering several different dances that included individuals from many different cultures.
 6. Two staff development sessions on intergroup relations were offered to school staff.
-

Meeting Resistance with Persistence



When schools take positive steps toward improving intergroup relations, community attitudes can undercut progress. As shown by the Henderson Middle School in Garden City, Kansas, when adults are persistent about giving diverse student groups opportunities to work together toward a common goal, even strongly held attitudes begin to yield.

Kenneth Henderson Middle School

GARDEN CITY, KANSAS

Garden City is a town of 30,000 in western Kansas. An historically Anglo American community, Garden City's ethnic mix has changed rapidly since the opening of a large meat packing plant attracted many Mexican American workers during the 1980s. A federal refugee resettlement program has recently brought a large number of Asians to Garden City as well.

For many residents, the encounter between cultures has not been smooth. One local Mexican American states, "I think minorities get treated pretty shabbily here and they get resentful. I think the White population is fearful of this new immigrant population. The impression is 'they don't take care of their yards, they take your jobs, they're always drinking and causing trouble.'" A Caucasian resident notes, "I lived in an all White community before this and the first time I encountered racism was in Garden City. There is no interaction of groups in the communities and racial mixing is not welcomed." An Asian resident says bluntly, "There's no intergroup relations here."

Sadly, community segregation and suspicion spills over into Garden City's schools. Low attendance by immigrant parents at conferences and PTA meetings is offered as evidence by some teachers and parents as proof that immigrant parents don't care about their children's education. However, those who work with immigrant families say the parents are busy working the evening shift at the meat packing plant or else have no transportation to the schools.

"The widest myth here is, 'These parents don't care.' I think the community doesn't come because it is not asked. The school should ask things from the community more often. I think now it's up to the teachers to change."

Ming De Yi, an ESL teacher who has worked with Henderson's immigrant parents for the past five years, blames the school. "The widest myth here is, 'These parents don't care.' I think the community doesn't come because it is not asked. The school should ask things from the community more often. For school events, I call parents one by one, and 60 percent of the parents have shown up. I think now it's up to the teachers to change."

Immigrant students report racist remarks by teachers. One student declared that teachers "shouldn't make fun of the way that somebody talks." According to Mexican American school staff, challenges to such remarks within the school have been met with indifference, "A lot of the attitudes are negative and a lot of them are very prejudicial, because there are teachers that comment on certain things within a class. We've reported them, we've said, 'This teacher's saying this or that,' and it is not being stopped."

In general, young immigrants feel their peers are more open minded than adults. As said by one student, "Some Whites don't accept some Hispanics, and some Blacks kind of stick with their own race. But there are times when they are accepted. Some kids make connections and some kids don't." Children also suffer from racism within the larger adult community. One student reported, "I can only go to this house after school until four o'clock. Then I've got to go home because his parents don't like Mexicans."

With these challenges in mind, the six-person Looking for America team tried to lay a foundation for improved intergroup understanding by focusing on four activities: an afterschool bus route; staff training for the faculty; multicultural activities for students; and orientation and information for immigrant parents.

Meeting Resistance

"We sent out a survey, and it became obvious that some teachers thought we were out to destroy American culture and replace it with minority culture. We had to explain that we were not seeking to replace American culture in Garden City, but to expand it, to make it more comfortable for everyone."

The LFA team encountered resistance from the start. Staff reactions ranged from a small group who were enthusiastic to many who were apathetic to some who were openly hostile. ESL teacher and team member Glennard McKeehan recalls the initial hostility and misunderstanding, "We sent out a survey, and it became obvious that some teachers thought we were out to destroy American culture and replace it with minority culture. We had to explain that we were not seeking to replace American culture in Garden City, but to expand it, to make it more comfortable for everyone."

Even after a staff training session on cultural awareness, the LFA team reported difficulty in getting teachers to volunteer for project subcommittees. Teachers were also reluctant to stay after school for extracurricular activities. In some cases, teachers would volunteer for a project, then fail to invest the necessary time to complete it. One team member expressed the problem succinctly, "Some of our teachers are very prejudiced and have a low opinion of our minority students."

Despite these obstacles, the team showed perseverance throughout the project year. When it looked like the proposed afterschool bus would be too expensive, Glennard McKeehan was able to negotiate a lower price. When staff participation was low, team leader Barbara Lamborn made sure team members carried out their planned activities for students. To reward teachers who did participate, the LFA team hosted a Teacher Appreciation and Recognition ceremony in the winter. Despite this effort, most staff still failed to respond.

In the spring, the team redoubled its effort to create enthusiasm by offering minigrants for projects with a genuine multicultural theme. The minigrant concept was an immediate hit with teachers, generating numerous applications from which 25 grants were awarded. As one teacher noted, "Department budgets are never enough for dedicated teachers

Students learned about other cultures. A number of immigrant students joined sports programs for the first time as a result of the afterschool bus. A few interracial couples were observed at school. Some staff felt "a window" had been opened.

searching for new methods and materials to reach their students, so migrant money was definitely facilitating." Here was a victory for the team, as they finally received some faculty support.

Efforts geared toward the students had further impact. Students learned about other cultures through activities offered by the PEAK program. Coaches were pleased to see a number of immigrant students join sports programs for the first time as a result of the afterschool bus. A few interracial couples were observed at school. Some staff felt "a window" had been opened, allowing curious students to ask about each other's backgrounds.

Although LFA team members point to these small steps with pride, continuation of project activities remains in doubt. The afterschool bus, the most important symbol of commitment to change at Henderson, may not survive the budget ax. While Barbara Lamborn's PEAK activities have had a positive impact on students, no other faculty members have attempted to "pick up the ball" for next year. Team members confess they are "worn out from waging an uphill battle." It remains to be seen if the rest of the Henderson staff will help to continue the initiative, or just let it die.

Team Dynamics

The LFA team met at least once a month. "We operated on a pretty loose structure. Barbara was the de facto chair. We were all pretty open to ideas," says Glennard McKeenan. Bonnie Simpson adds, "We'd deliberate, weigh the pros and cons and reach a consensus." The team agrees that it worked well together. "We were all responsible. Each person learned to take a section of the work," says Bonnie Simpson.

Barriers

Without strong administrative support, team members carried on activities with too few hands, loud complaints, and not enough time. Apathy took its toll.

Apathy was identified as the largest obstacle. Teachers did not join committees or show up for committee meetings. Projects were not completed on time, or even at all. For example, because the music committee and the calendar committee failed to meet in a timely manner, the ethnic music stereo system was not set up until December.

Lack of staff involvement left too much work for the LFA team. Without strong administrative support, team members carried on activities with too few hands, loud complaints, and not enough time. Apathy took its toll.

Facilitating Factors

Most team members mentioned the LFA Institute¹ in Boston as the most important facilitating factor. "Well organized, well presented, and it impacted me personally," said Glennard McKeehan. Barbara Lamborn said it was "eye-opening, emotional, and good." Team members said they found the resource notebook full of valuable information. "We used everything," stated Bonnie Simpson. Not only did they use many of the institute's activities to train Henderson teachers, they also presented the activities at a local district staff training session for other schools.

Staff Attitudes

Despite resistance, Barbara Lamborn concludes that the project "created more of an awareness among faculty and staff." She feels the staff now knows, "This is something to think about. We made them more accepting of differences."

Glennard McKeehan notes, "Teachers can now differentiate between special education and ESL students. They know how to look for learning disabilities as distinct from language problems." Although the LFA team may not have made converts of all Henderson faculty, team members agree that intergroup relations was put on the table and important inroads were made.

Impact

Asked if LFA activities would continue when there is no more project funding, team leader Barbara Lamborn was circumspect. Bonnie Simpson was optimistic, however, noting, "Things started. I think they should continue. The team has a real bond that unites us in our efforts."

1. See description of LFA Institute in Appendix A: Methodology, p. 102.

FACT SHEET

Kenneth Henderson Middle School
2046 North Fleming
Garden City, KS 67846
(312) 534-3030
Steve Ternes, School Principal

Number of students:	868
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Grade levels:	6 through 8
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Ethnic composition:	61% Caucasian 29% Hispanic 8% Southeast Asian, 1% African American 0.5% Native American
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Immigrant students:	16%, primarily Mexican American, Central American, Southeast Asian
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LFA team members:	Ms. Barbara Lamborn, <i>Team Leader and Advisor Base Period Coordinator</i> Mr. Glennard McKeehan, <i>ESL and Social Studies Teacher</i> Ms. Bonnie Simpson, <i>Science Teacher</i> Mr. Ming De Yi, <i>ESL Teacher and Community Representative</i> Ms. Jane Vanderhoff, <i>Music Teacher</i> Ms. Gayla Carroll, <i>Teacher</i>
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LFA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. **Afterschool Bus Route:** Immigrant students were poorly represented in extracurricular activities at Henderson. The LFA team surmised this was because most immigrant students live far away from school and most parents were unable to provide transportation. The team decided that Henderson should provide a free afterschool bus for students who wanted to stay late. The afterschool bus ran all year and was said to be responsible for attracting immigrant students to sports teams and other activities.
 2. **Multicultural Day:** Students at Henderson have one period a day called Advisor Base during which they gather into homeroom-like classes to study with an academic advisor. During the LFA year, Barbara Lamborn was Advisor Base Coordinator at Henderson and headed the Looking for America team. As a result, she took the opportunity to designate every Friday in Advisor Base as Multicultural Day. Barbara designed games and activities that highlighted the cultures of recent Garden City newcomers. Crossword puzzles, word jumbles, and other puzzles were created using the history and culture of countries such as Vietnam, Mexico, Laos, and Cambodia.
 3. **Staff Development:** At a late summer staff training session, teachers were asked to participate in three games that the LFA team had experienced at the summer institute. Each game is designed to heighten awareness of cultural identity and its impact on interpersonal relations. The staff was briefed about the LFA team plans for the school year and given a Looking for America T-shirt to encourage project participation. Another day-long session was held in the spring with a larger enticement for involvement. The team laid out a plan to award minigrants to teachers who created multicultural activities for students. The team received numerous applications, from which 25 minigrants were awarded.
 4. **Teacher Appreciation and Recognition Ceremony:** During the winter, the LFA team hosted a Looking for America Teacher Appreciation and Recognition Ceremony to reward teachers who sponsored afterschool activities for students and to entice other staff members into the project. The LFA team honored the teachers in a ceremony in which they were awarded LFA coffee mugs.
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5. **Ethnic Music Hour and Calendar:** The LFA music committee researched, purchased, and installed a stereo system for the Henderson Middle School cafeteria to provide ethnic music to students and staff before school. In coordination with the ethnic calendar committee, certain holidays were highlighted each month to provide a balance of cultures.
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6. **Survival Spanish for Teachers:** In response to reports of mutual suspicion, misunderstandings, and a lack of communication between Spanish-speaking immigrant students and teachers, ESL teacher Glennard McKeehan started an afterschool class for teachers called "Survival Spanish in the Classroom." In this class, Glennard taught members of the faculty and staff various basic phrases to allow teachers to help Spanish-speaking students.
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7. **Holiday Celebrations:** During the LFA year, Henderson Middle School held its first Cinco de Mayo and Chinese New Year celebrations.
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Building Alliances: Creating "US"



Adults must take responsibility to provide opportunities for students from different cultures and backgrounds to work together toward a common goal. When adults are uncomfortable with their own feelings about race and culture, they are unable to model the skills and beliefs that lead to positive intergroup relations. Miami Beach Senior High decided to focus its efforts on adults.

Miami Beach Senior High School

MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA

Miami Beach Senior High School has been at the cutting edge of intergroup relations since integration of African American and Caucasian students in the Dade County public school system in the 1960s. At that time, faculty at Beach High underwent extensive training in communication skills, conflict resolution, values clarification, and understanding differences in race and culture. This early intervention helped Beach High adapt to the influx of Cubans that soon followed.

Despite this tradition, change has come so fast to South Florida in recent years that it has been hard for Beach High to keep up. In the early 1980s, the Mariel Boatlift added thousands of Cuban immigrants to the already overcrowded Dade County schools. That influx was followed by large numbers of refugees from Haiti and Central America. In the last ten years, students from all over South America—along with new immigrants from Russia and Bosnia—have also come to Miami.

As a result, local apartments that once were home to transplanted northerners now house immigrant families living under crowded conditions. While Beach High still enjoys the reputation of being a “good public school,” it now serves mostly students from low-income and working-class families.

Beach High has been transformed from a predominantly European American school to a predominantly Hispanic school with tremendous diversity. The student body is 57 percent Hispanic, 21 percent African American, and 20 percent Caucasian, with a small percentage of Asians and Native Americans. More than 79 different countries are represented in the student body, which is more than half foreign-born. The majority of student homes are non-English-speaking, representing 27 different languages. Among Hispanics, there are Mexicans, Cubans, Nicaraguans, Puerto Ricans, Brazilians, Colombians, and representatives from every other Central and South American country. Among African American students, one finds U.S.-born, Haitians, Jamaicans, and West Indians. The Caucasian population includes significant numbers of Jewish students, students of European heritage from South America, and refugees from Eastern European countries.

Discussions with students and staff before the LFA project indicated acknowledgement and some pride in their diversity. Many pointed out the

Students and staff identified two persistent problems: a group of teachers had not accepted the changing demographics of Beach High; and student course enrollment had resulted in de facto segregation. Principal Renuart added his desire to involve more of the immigrant and low-income parents in school decision making.

boats in the school's courtyards that had once been used by Cuban immigrants to come to the United States. Students and staff see them as a reminder of how far some of their students have come.

Beach High's celebration of its diversity might lead to the conclusion that it is a model school. In fact, Beach High was initially selected by the LFA project as a promising practice for *Looking for America, Volume I*. However, as conversations with students and staff proceeded, underlying tensions and shortcomings surfaced. Students and staff identified two persistent problems: a group of teachers had not accepted the changing demographics of Beach High; and student course enrollment had resulted in de facto segregation. Principal Bill Renuart added his desire to involve more of the immigrant and low-income parents in school decision making. Despite the school's changing population, upper-income parents still dominated the PTA and other parent-oriented activities.

Students identified additional problems. Many gave examples of racist behavior on the part of teachers. Although there were no overt physical conflicts, students reported incidents of name calling and taunting. More frequently, they pointed out racial and ethnic patterns of segregation due to the fact that "some students think they are better than others."

Despite the school's diversity, students also pointed to a profound ignorance and disinterest among the student body in each other's culture. "It's like we all know we're immigrants but everyone ignores it. No one wants to know about anybody else's culture. We never talk about it," said one student. Because it was clear that Miami Beach Senior High still had some work to do before it achieved intergroup harmony, it was chosen as an LFA intervention site.

A Diverse Team

The Miami Beach LFA team was among the most diverse of those attending the LFA Institute. Three male teachers on the team were immigrants: one Jamaican, one Nicaraguan, and one Cuban. Another member of the team was a female Jewish survivor of the Holocaust. An African American female and a Caucasian female rounded out the team.

As the team identified and ranked problems, every issue seemed linked to a core group of teachers who found it difficult to accept the changing demographics of Beach High.

At the LFA Institute,¹ the team realized that most of them had never spoken to each other before. Through group exercises and other interaction, team members gained insight into each other's thoughts and actions.

1. See description of LFA Institute in Appendix A: Methodology, p. 102.

At the LFA Institute, the team realized that most of them had never spoken to each other before. They gained insight into each other's thoughts and actions and learned more about the students in their school. They asked themselves, "What if all the staff at Beach High could go through an experience like this?"

leading them to discover common interests. Through lectures and written material, they learned more about the students in their school. After some reflection, they asked themselves, "What if all the staff at Beach High could go through an experience like this?"

As a starting point, they needed to replicate the experience of the LFA Institute for the staff at Beach High. They spent the rest of the time at the Institute figuring out how to marshal district and school resources to supplement the LFA grant to provide a two-day retreat for 175 Miami Beach Senior High staff members.

Building Alliances

Back in Miami, the original team quickly expanded. There was a sense of excitement as this group of like-minded individuals set about to change the environment at their school. The team worked well together, assuming roles as writer, administrator, computer expert, logistics planner, or project accountant. The group named themselves US: Uniting Staff and Students. Their mission was to create a true sense of "US" at Beach Senior High.

Retreat plans were advanced at weekly meetings. The team agreed that all staff would be included in the retreats—teachers, cafeteria workers, counselors, custodial staff, security personnel, teacher aides, and all administration members, including the principal. To include everyone, three two-day sessions would be required. Attendance would be voluntary, and substitute teachers would be provided where necessary. In some cases, administrators or other available staff would cover classes.

The team decided to hold the retreats at a local hotel, away from the school. Removing staff from the school setting would contribute to the participants' freedom to express themselves. Recalling how the comfortable setting at the LFA Institute had fostered a sense of easy camaraderie, the team wanted the staff to feel like professionals.

As the date of the first retreat approached, talk about the upcoming event was all over the school. Very little had been told to the staff about the content of the retreat, except that it had to do with creating "US." The team placed fliers in mail boxes and around the school, announcing "IT'S COMING!" Tantalizing announcements were made over the school television station.

Curious and excited, staff arrived early at the hotel a few blocks away from school. Pastries and coffee, unusual for staff development, were offered. "Even the fact that the tables had table cloths made us feel special," said one teacher.

The retreat opened with a welcome from David Brooks, LFA team leader. He explained that the primary goal was to build alliances among

staff and, ultimately, between students and staff. The LFA team had three objectives. First, participants should relax and enjoy themselves. Second, participants should have an open mind about the events of the retreat. Third, everyone should participate in activities.

The days were filled with listening to an assortment of speakers from the community and participating in cultural awareness activities, alliance-building activities, and workshops on specific areas of culture and ethnicity. Rules for one of the alliance building activities summed up the tone of the retreat:

RULES FOR ALLIANCE BUILDING

1. Listen with respect and an open mind.
2. Confidentiality. Everything discussed stays here.
3. Use the "I" statement rather than the accusatory "You."
4. Do not debate the other person's experience.
5. No cross talk or interruptions.
6. No put downs or "zaps."
7. You have a right to pass.
8. It's okay to risk.
9. Begin with "like" rather than "dislike."
10. Agree that this is a "safe place."

The presenters were members of the community, Dade County central office personnel from the Multicultural Office, and members of the team. They were skilled in non-threatening techniques of drawing people out and supporting their statements. The presenters were also skilled at handling discord.

An Unexpected Finale

Conflict management was not necessary at the first two retreats. A district evaluator stated that she had never seen such positive and enthusiastic responses. People formed relationships with others they had never spoken to. Teachers expressed a desire to use newly learned techniques to engage their students fully. Most expressed heartfelt thanks for the insights they received.

The third retreat presented a different picture, however, as a combination of factors led to an explosive, racially charged exchange between two staff members. The exchange escalated to name calling and, although the exchange was brief, it hovered in the air for the rest of the day. People chose sides and spent a considerable amount of time discussing the event privately.

The team acknowledged that the retreat was the first time staff had felt safe enough to engage in such candid discussions. The fact that an explosive exchange had taken place was an indicator of movement forward.

Several circumstances led to the conflict. The final retreat involved many individuals who had turned down the first two invitations. The staff members involved in the dispute had held these feelings for a long time with no opportunity to express them. Other disgruntled staff members prolonged the conflict and, rather than calmly handling the incident, the presenter entered as a participant.

It took the team some time to realize that the incident had not ruined the final retreat. As they reviewed the events of the day, they noted them more objectively. First, although the incident took place in the morning, all the participants came back for the afternoon session. Putting the incident in context, they acknowledged that this was the first time staff had felt safe enough to engage in such candid discussions. The fact that the discussion had taken place was an indicator of movement forward. They were also reminded of how important it is to have well-trained facilitators who know how to handle such incidents constructively. Finally, the incident was testimony to the importance of their efforts to provide information and a neutral forum for staff to discuss intergroup relations.

Team Dynamics

The team that went to Boston for the LFA Institute was chosen by the principal. Only two members had participated in the development of the original proposal. Due to the size of Beach High, most team members knew each other only by sight and had never worked together. There was some tension over the leadership of the team, but eventually David Brooks emerged by unanimous consent.

Back at school, the team added several members as planning for the retreats began. At least eight other staff members joined, attending the twice-monthly meetings and contributing ideas and hours of effort. David Brooks offers high praise for the team: "They were wonderful. We treated each other collegially, in a positive, sharing manner. We had our own opinions, but we were professional. We could laugh and argue."

The team arrived at decisions by consensus. "If there were any disagreement, we worked it out through discussion," recalls team member Ray Delgado.

Barriers

All team members wish they had focused more energy on follow-up to the retreats. They feel that the details of three large retreats kept them too busy to devote time to other activities.

Several express disappointment that the attitudes of some who attended the retreats did not change. Despite their objective analysis of the conflict at the final retreat, the team cites this retreat as its greatest difficulty. "We wondered if it would have an effect back at the school. We worried about the aftermath," says David Brooks.

Facilitating Factors

The energy the team created and the singularity of their chosen goal—to change teacher attitudes—was the most important facilitating factor. Interaction among team members fed the energy, and their personalities and sense of responsibility led them to work well together.

Another facilitating factor listed by the team was Principal Renuart's "hands off" policy. He chose the team and then stepped back to let them do their work. He let them know he was there in case they needed help and he kept up with activities. "But he was incredibly flexible," says one team member.

Every team member also mentioned the utility of the LFA Institute as the model for their retreats. Team member Jason Hebert says, "The materials were indispensable when we put our retreats together. We learned what could be done. It was eye opening for us."

Staff Attitudes

"Staff come up to me now and ask me questions about particular cultures. They ask me about behavior problems and whether they might be related to some sort of cultural conflict."

Although teacher responses to the retreats were very positive, it was difficult for the team to overlook the negative responses from a small segment. But they were able to point out some subtle changes in staff behavior. "They come up to me now and ask me questions about particular cultures. They ask me about behavior problems and whether they might be related to some sort of cultural conflict," says Jason Hebert. Team member Pam Shorter notes, "It did have some effect. People are friendlier." "I think it has made some teachers look at students a second time in dealing with them, serving them, and communicating with them," concludes David Brooks.

Impact

The immediate success of the retreats was apparent from evaluations and comments. However, long-term impact was more elusive. The Miami team used all their resources to implement the three retreats. They knew that for professional development to be effective, it must be continual. Although follow-up sessions were discussed by team members, plans were never made.

FACT SHEET

Miami Beach Senior High School
2231 Prairie Avenue
Miami Beach, FL 33139
(305) 532-4515
Dr. William Renuart, School Principal

Number of students:	2,747
Grade levels:	9 through 12
Ethnic composition:	57% Hispanic 20% Caucasian 21% African American 1% Asian .1% Native American
Immigrant students:	50%+, primarily Caribbean, Central American, South American
LFA team members:	David Brooks, <i>ESL Teacher, Team Leader</i> Ray Delgado, <i>English Teacher</i> Jason Hebert, <i>ESL Teacher</i> Julie Jared, <i>Assistant Principal</i> Miriam Kassenoff, <i>English Teacher/ Multicultural Coordinator</i> Pam Shorter, <i>Business Teacher</i>

Summary

9 REFLECTIONS 89

I: Elements of Success 91

II: Lessons Learned 97

Reflections



A year of work at seven diverse schools leads to a central conclusion: Professional educators must create regular and sustained opportunities for students of all ages and all groups to work together to attain common goals across barriers of language, race, and culture.

To guide those who would take on this vital task, this chapter identifies common elements in project activities that either

promoted or discouraged success. Key considerations that should be part of any effort to improve school climate are also examined.

I. Elements of Success

Leadership

Vision comes, in part, from first-hand experience of cultural differences. Leaders of vision are able to draw on their own experiences to understand the feelings of students and staff. Their visions are rooted in actually living with differences, and achieving success because of or in spite of them.

Reviews of successful projects of any type often identify leadership as a necessary element. In schools working to improve relations among ethnic groups, two aspects of leadership are particularly important—vision and management skills.

The project leader, along with the administration, must have a concrete vision of what the school will be like when good relations exist. This vision comes, in part, from first-hand experience of cultural differences. Martha DiCicco learned to appreciate differences working in special education. Connie Kiamos grew up in the ethnic neighborhoods of Chicago. Barbara Allocco came to this country from Poland as a teenager. Rosa Morley was born in Cuba of Chinese parents. James Claypool spent some time working in South America. They are able to draw on their own experiences to understand the feelings of students and staff. Their visions are rooted in actually living with differences, and achieving success because of or in spite of them.

Openness to the possibilities of difference is an important aspect of vision. Leaders at the successful LFA sites sought to create positive situations in which differences could flourish. They were able to imagine working in communities of people who are different from themselves. Their imagination gave them the ability to share their vision with others. Sometimes, their vision had to be big enough for everybody until others "caught on." Barbara Lamborn's vision kept her developing project activities even when she found unused copies of her memos in the trash can in the teachers' lounge. She persisted until others joined her.

Although management skills are an important requirement for most successful projects, specific skills are necessary to manage an intergroup relations project. For example, reaching compromise between groups with competing interests can require the ultimate in communication skill.

- In Fargo, Martha DiCicco found ways to communicate with Kurdish mothers who walked their children to school. Through sign language and smiles she passed along school rules, and helped the mothers communicate their needs.
- Chicago principal Connie Kiamos found ways to communicate with elderly residents suspicious of the "different" kids who now walked through their neighborhoods on their way to school.

- In Houston, James Claypool used Spanish-language skills to speak at meetings of the Salvadoran neighborhood association.

Another necessary skill is the ability simultaneously to manage several program components. Successful projects included multiple activities for parents, students, and teachers that were all monitored closely.

- In Fargo, Martha DiCicco distributed responsibility among the staff, but remained on top of every activity.
- In Los Angeles and Garden City, Rosa Morley and Barbara Lamborn ran the meetings, sent out memos, reminded team members and others of their responsibilities, and then pitched in to make sure things got done.
- In Chicago, Barbara Allocco oversaw the myriad details of the International Festival as well as budgeting, arranging for speakers, and facilitating other activities spearheaded by team members.

Because the school-based projects were a single year in duration, activities had to be schoolwide and pervasive to make a difference. Extracurricular activities, leadership projects, curriculum changes, improvements in teacher, community, and parent relations, and administrative changes all had to happen within the project year. Only those with the ability to keep many balls in the air at the same time had a sustained impact.

Successful leaders knew how to navigate the system. They knew how to accomplish their goals by functioning effectively within the bureaucracy and not allowing it to become an impassable obstacle.

Successful leaders knew how to navigate the system. All the projects were situated within larger school district bureaucracies. Much of the financial management, as well as the purchasing and hiring of consultants, had to be channeled through the school district office. The layered processes of filling out the correct form or having activities approved by appropriate staff or boards proved cumbersome to those unfamiliar with large systems. Leaders in successful projects knew how to accomplish their goals by functioning effectively within the bureaucracy and not allowing it to become an impassable obstacle.

A review of the quality of leadership at the seven project sites leads to some general observations about the role of vision and management:

- Vision and strong management skills were present in all successful teams, although both were not always found in the same person.
- The administration of the school was committed to the vision in successful projects. In all successful cases, an administrator was part of the team.
- Although project management skills did not have to be embodied within the principal, she or he did have to be committed to the vision before it was adopted by the entire school staff.

- In places lacking leadership, team members lowered their expectations almost immediately. Project efforts became an almost constant effort against inertia.
- When the principal had a coherent vision of intergroup harmony, racism and resistance did not survive. When the principal was indifferent to the project, racist sentiments were more evident.

Alliances

Alliances were crucial to successful projects. Many participants noted that until intergroup relations improved among staff, it was impossible to improve relations among students. As the projects developed, teams with good working relationships had more success.

Alliances were crucial to successful projects. Improving relations in school began with good relations on the team. Many participants noted that until intergroup relations improved among staff, it was impossible to improve relations among students. As the projects developed, teams with good working relationships had more success.

Although many members within teams did not know each other at the beginning, some strong alliances were created during the week of the LFA Institute. Often, these relationships were formed across cultures. The true test came when teams returned to their sites. Successful teams selected activities that allowed alliances to develop among teachers.

- The Houston team created a reading group among teachers. The group read and discussed current literature that represented different cultural viewpoints. By sharing opinions, individual members came to know each other and form new social relationships.
- Miami's teacher retreats provided a forum for staff to create relationships.
- In Fargo, teachers formed work committees that reinforced their existing relationships.

Alliances with parents were also a major part of successful efforts.

- In Fargo, alliances with parents included formal and informal efforts. Informal efforts were exemplified by a welcoming environment in the school and home visits made by teachers and translators to the homes of all new immigrant students. Formal efforts ranged from academically focused activities such as family learning nights in math and science to family skating nights and a schoolwide picnic. While immigrant parents were especially targeted through personal invitations and the use of interpreters and translators, family activities were for all parents, providing a forum where immigrant and U.S.-born parents could work together.

- The Houston team fostered new parent alliances by including immigrant parents in school activities and provided them with information about timely subjects such as adolescent development, learning, and school policies. Success was measured by the creation of alliances among immigrant parents, who were then able to send envoys to schoolwide parent meetings.

Heeding student voices about the impact of the community on schools and reading the literature on the importance of school/community collaboration, successful teams built alliances with various sectors of the community. Frequent strains between community groups—divided by ethnicity, race, and class—made development of these alliances particularly difficult.

Interestingly, the old model of building community alliances—targeting established groups—no longer necessarily applies. In successful projects, alliances with community groups tended to be very interactive, involving nontraditional groups.

- In Houston, the school, business groups, parents, and the Central American Resource and Education Center worked together to curb gang activity. All parties had a voice in shaping the approach.
- Principal Kiamos in Chicago took groups of students from all racial and income levels into the neighborhood around the school—largely populated by elderly German Americans—to clean graffiti off garages and walls. In addition to having students feel more a part of the community, the principal wanted students to meet the people who built their community.

In some cases, individual community representatives took the initiative to form alliances with the school. In Fargo, the principal came to rely on leaders in the Kurdish and Vietnamese communities to advise her on many project activities. They helped her to understand the cultures, reach out to parents, and identify community issues. They became not only allies, but resources. Individuals within community organizations, such as Lutheran Social Services, were also important to the Fargo team.

Perhaps the most treasured community alliance was developed between the Los Angeles school and an 87-year-old African American woman. She gave the students a sense of the evolution of the community and gave the school a sense of history.

One of the most interesting community alliances took place in Los Angeles between the school and a group of local artists. Together, members of this alliance refurbished an old woodworking shop at the school to create an art gallery. Here student and community artists displayed work that captured the cultures surrounding the school. In another artistic endeavor, students from the Los Angeles site collaborated with the city opera company to produce "A Place Called Home," an opera that told the story of an immigrant finding his place in the United States. Perhaps the most treasured community alliance was developed between the school and an 87-year-old African American woman who lived in the neighborhood all of her life. Her ties to Los Angeles' political circles brought in immeasurable resources and

In places where community alliances were not developed, team efforts were less effective. Community alliances appear to be necessary to sustain momentum over time.

When alliances among staff members did not materialize, the project broke down despite the serious efforts of an individual or group. Personality conflicts and power struggles obstructed progress.

support. She gave the students a sense of the evolution of the community and gave the school a sense of history.

In places where community alliances were not developed, team efforts were less effective. Community alliances appear to be necessary to sustain momentum over time. Strong community alliances create pockets of interest and support at various levels and among different constituencies. As a result, efforts to improve relations are not dependent on any single person or interest group.

The absence of alliances in the community were reflected in the school. Schools that strongly identified with negative community attitudes could not create alliances between community groups and the school.

When alliances among staff members did not materialize, the project broke down despite the serious efforts of an individual or group. Personality conflicts and power struggles obstructed progress. In one case, a deep schism between the administration and the teachers, compounded by union issues, sabotaged the hard work of team members. Although both sides voiced a desire to have the project work, their conflict kept the project from being fully implemented. Each side had a vision, but without an alliance, nothing was implemented.

Sustained Progress

Successful projects took a long-term, comprehensive view of intergroup relations. Although the project funded the sites for a single year, Fargo, Chicago, Houston, and Los Angeles developed plans on their own for the next year. In some cases, the long-term view was linked to sustained alliances with the community and other stakeholders.

Others saw their schools as evolving entities that must change along with student needs, while holding constant mutual respect and cooperation. This belief mirrored a view that positive intergroup relations are good for students, not just a matter of fashion. These schools measured themselves against their own standard. Their efforts were tailored to the needs of their students and community; they did not merely seek someone else's curriculum.

- Rosa Morley, Assistant Principal in Los Angeles, stated, "We know what we need for the kids and we adjust mandates as necessary," while she negotiated for an immigrant intake center at the school. Cheryl Broyles, another assistant principal, saw student and teacher involvement in anti-Proposition 187 activities as part of the evolution of the school. For her, these activities symbolized the need for a long-term effort to improve intergroup relations.

At successful sites, LFA activities were not icing on the cake; team members saw a need to infuse efforts throughout school life. Efforts became second nature. For example, at many sites, fliers now go out automatically in different languages and teachers build cultural connections into the curriculum.

- In Houston, James Claypool insisted that staff training in intergroup relations continue beyond the project. He saw the election of a Mexican American PTA president and of an Argentine immigrant student as student council president as small steps in a long-range plan.

Comprehensive approaches were also part of sustained intergroup relations. At successful sites, LFA activities were not icing on the cake; team members saw a need to infuse efforts throughout school life. Positive intergroup relations was seen as a core value. Efforts became second nature. For example, at many sites, fliers now go out automatically in different languages and teachers build cultural connections into the curriculum.

A comprehensive approach also allowed everyone to have a stake in the process. The minigrants in Los Angeles and Garden City provided activities in all area of the curriculum and school life. In Fargo, every teacher worked on a committee; the activities they developed cut across the entire range of school life.

When activities were not sufficiently comprehensive, alliances deteriorated because there were not enough goals and activities for all in the school community to feel they were part of the program.

Professional Development

Every project required some level of staff development. Early in the LFA Institute, there was unanimous agreement that staff development was the first step on the road to improved intergroup relations.

The inability of many adults to deal with racism in a rational manner and to communicate feelings and views about race and ethnicity led schools in Miami, Houston, and Philadelphia to plan several workshops on intercultural relations. One site focused almost solely on staff development, finding it necessary before progress could be made on any other front.

II. Lessons Learned

One team member described implementation of an intergroup relations plan as "chipping away versus a big bang." In fact, successful projects did chip away at bias and prejudice, sometimes taking three steps forward and one step back. In the end, it was not so much the activities that were implemented, but the spirit that was created.

Consider Pre-Existing Conditions

Existing school climate and general conditions such as income, organization, and leadership caused some teams to modify their initial plans during implementation. For example, community context was not always taken into account during project planning.

Management skills, identified as necessary for project leaders, were also required from team members. Many had no experience working with a budget. In hindsight, a session on project management would have been a useful addition to the LFA Institute.

Shortage of time was also a barrier, especially for teachers already faced with too many demands. Successful teams acknowledged the problem by setting aside time to work on their projects. They made their work a priority, recognizing that other resources can sometimes make up for a lack of time.

Generate External Support

The role of NCAS and other national and local organizations such as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Polish American Society, and Educators for Social Responsibility was often described as "irreplaceable."

Technical assistance was crucial to maintaining project momentum. The level of assistance necessary depended largely on pre-existing conditions and team dynamics. Conditions that necessitated increased technical assistance included:

- Poor school leadership.
- Power struggles within the team.
- Power struggles between the team and the administration.

- Staff resistance.
- Community resistance or apathy.
- Lack of knowledge or experience with immigrant groups.

Technical assistance had to be shaped carefully to local conditions. Trust issues can be magnified when technical assistance is provided by "outsiders." Sensitive and appropriate technical assistance from outside groups can help to build leadership and momentum. In a few cases, the support was more valued because it was from the outside.

Define Success in Context

A clear analysis of success in this instance must distinguish between accomplishments related to running an effective project and actual improvements in intergroup relations in school. Schools should first consider pre-existing conditions, then measure progress from that benchmark.

Expectations in intergroup relations should always reflect recognition of local community values. When success is defined by local community values, the best interest of all children can be taken into account. At times, actions that are in the best interest of all children may be in conflict with what individual groups consider in the best interest of their children.

Impact for the seven different projects was measured in many ways. For some, just accomplishing activities was a success. For others, new and better interactions among team members was apparent. In still other cases, teams settled for no less than having an effect on how students related to each other.

Appendices

A. METHODOLOGY	101
B. INTERGROUP RELATIONS	103
C. RESOURCES	107
D. NATIONAL COALITION OF ADVOCATES FOR STUDENTS	113

Methodology

In 1993, NCAS contacted more than 600 advocacy groups, education agencies, and school reform organizations in an effort to identify public schools that offered opportunities to examine ways in which students and adults can work together to transcend barriers of race, language, and culture.

Site Selection

Seven project sites were selected from more than 100 nominated schools:

Miami Beach Senior High School	Miami Beach, FL
Jay Cooke Middle School	Philadelphia, PA
Robert E. Lee Senior High School	Houston, TX
Kenneth Henderson Middle School	Garden City, KS
Steinmetz Academic Center (High School)	Chicago, IL
Thomas Jefferson Elementary School	Fargo, ND
Belmont High School	Los Angeles, CA

The seven schools represent immigrant groups from all over the world—African Americans, Native Americans, U.S.-born children of immigrants, and European American students who trace their U.S. roots back for generations. The sites represent small and large schools, schools in urban settings and in small cities, and schools from many geographic regions of the country. Foreign-born populations at the schools range from 10 percent to 85 percent of the student bodies.

Three important similarities existed among the schools at the time of selection: there was notable separation between racial and ethnic groups; a core group of school staff desired improved school-site relations; and staff were actively engaged in a search for strategies.

School-Site Teams

After selection, each school was asked to submit a detailed one-year plan and to name a team to guide the project that reflected the diversity of the school population. Schools were also requested to include at least one

administrator on the team—preferably the principal—and at least one representative from the community.

LFA Institute

Prior to school-site implementation, team members attended a week-long training session in Boston designed to:

- Ensure that all participants clearly understood the project's goals.
- Create a common bond within and across teams.
- Provide participants with current research and school practices in the field of intergroup relations.
- Provide an opportunity for teams to develop working partnerships.

The daily schedule at the institute provided at least three hours for work on project plans. The balance of the day was devoted to workshops and lectures.

During the training session, each team identified and assigned priority to intergroup problems at their school. They then generated potential solutions with specific activities. By the end of the week, each team had developed a detailed plan that included goals, objectives, activities, responsibilities, and a budget.

Site Support

Each of the sites received \$32,000 from NCAS in direct funding or technical assistance. NCAS staff visited each site at least three times during the 1993–94 school year to provide assistance and to document activities. Additional technical assistance was provided regularly by telephone. Each project submitted quarterly reports on their progress, as well as mid-year financial reports.

NCAS staff conducted introductory and follow-up focus groups with students. A teacher survey designed to determine teacher perceptions concerning issue of race and culture was conducted at each site. Detailed interviews with all team members and school principals were conducted at the end of the project year.

Intergroup Relations

Issues of racial and ethnic diversity and public schools have a long, complex, and often contentious history. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, conflicts about the mission and the role of public schools in the United States were largely centered around religious differences. During the second half of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century, race and ethnicity have assumed center stage, as questions of how public schools define and perpetuate what it means to be "American" are continuously debated.

Compared to the extended dialogue concerning diversity and the public schools, intergroup relations is a relatively new field. Emerging in the 1960s in response to the racial and ethnic pride of the civil rights movement, intergroup relations is an umbrella term that has come to refer to a wide range of instructional and noninstructional activities intended to help people of varying backgrounds, needs, and opinions communicate, teach, tolerate, and—ideally—appreciate each other. Strategies include a myriad of school activities, including multicultural education, conflict resolution, parent involvement, and school restructuring.

Americanization and Public Schools

Early in the twentieth century, public schools were not much concerned with racial understanding or cultural diversity. The role of the school was to help all students assimilate into mainstream American culture. The United States was in the midst of a tremendous immigration wave and the challenge of dealing with racial and ethnic diversity was cast in terms of how best to "Americanize" newcomers. Immigrants from Europe were expected to assimilate into the great "American melting pot"—the sooner, the better. Immigrants, especially those from southern and eastern Europe, were seen as "illiterate, docile, often lacking in conceptions of righteousness, liberty, law, order, public decency, and government."¹ Accordingly, public schools embarked on a widespread policy of Americanization to "assimilate the

1. Ellwood Cubberly in Joel H. Spring, *The American School, 1642-1985: Varieties of Historical Interpretation of the Foundations and Development of American Education* (New York: Longman, 1986), p. 151.

foreign-born [so] that they come to have our conceptions of laws and order and government and come to act in harmony with the spirit and purpose of our national ideals."

At the turn of the century, Americanization was not commonly challenged by immigrants because public education presented the best way out of poverty. For the sake of economic survival, most immigrants were willing to trade away their home culture for the promise of prosperity. It was their children and grandchildren who came of age in an ethnically diverse America who would question the ideal of a single American culture.

Americanization was aggressively employed with Native Americans, Mexican Americans, and others as the Mexican-American War and Puerto Rico's new status as a U.S. colony in 1898 incorporated new territory into the United States. In perhaps its most harsh incarnation, Native American students were required to attend government-run boarding schools in which students were forced to wear Western European clothes and prohibited from the use of Native American languages. Similarly, the Spanish language was prohibited in schools in Puerto Rico and throughout the Southwest. Curriculum materials in all of these settings stressed patriotism and loyalty to the American flag.

By contrast, African Americans were not considered candidates for Americanization. Rather, segregated schools for African Americans in the South—and to a lesser extent for Mexican Americans in the Southwest—kept races apart, rendering moot any questions of intergroup relations in schools.

Desegregation

In response to grossly inequitable public schools, the NAACP fought in court for equal educational opportunity for African Americans. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled segregated schools to be unconstitutional. During the sometimes violent implementation of desegregation, educators and activists began to ask themselves how schools might become places where students and teachers of different races could learn to get along. As university researchers began to study the dynamics of race relations, some school districts started to develop curricula with a direct focus on intergroup relations.

Civil rights victories for African Americans inspired other communities of color to raise issues of equal educational opportunity. For Latinos in the Southwest, demands for equal opportunity were linked with demands for bilingual education. These demands took two forms: lobbying for federal legislation concerning bilingual education; and litigating to achieve remedies to problems such as the widespread segregation of Latino students

and a lack of language services. In response, Congress passed the Bilingual Education Act in 1968.

As racial and ethnic pride increased within communities of color, African Americans, Native Americans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans pushed to have their home cultures recognized and given a place in schools. These efforts launched the first experiments in multicultural education. In the last two decades, programs addressing racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity in schools have become increasingly widespread.

Intergroup Relations Today

Today, the U.S. is in the midst of the largest single upsurge in immigration since the turn of the century. While 15 million immigrants came to the United States during the height of the great migration between 1900 and 1920, 17 million arrived between 1970 and 1990.¹

Not only have newcomers arrived on American shores in historic numbers, they have not come primarily from Europe. Since 1960, the proportion of immigrants coming from Europe has rapidly declined, while that of immigrants coming from Asia, Africa, and Latin America has rapidly increased. From 1981 to 1990, 15 percent of immigrants to the U.S. came from Europe, 45 percent from Asia, 12 percent from Mexico, and 26 percent from the rest of Latin America. These new immigrants include war refugees from Southeast Asia and Central America, highly educated sons and daughters of the Asian or Latin American upper and middle class, poor job seekers from the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands, and indigenous peoples from Central and South America.

Intergroup relations now focus on the everyday issues that result from changing demographics and uncertain school policies. Group dialogue and communication help students and teachers express feelings evoked by change. Joint learning projects help students get to know each other as three dimensional human beings, allowing young people to move beyond myths and stereotypes. Counseling strategies and interpersonal skills de-escalate disagreements and misunderstandings. Biculturalism helps minority and immigrant students avoid the self-mutilating choice between their home and school cultures. All of these strategies help to prepare children for the complexity of adult society.

1. "Figure 1: Immigration to the U.S. by Decade, 1821-1830 through 1981-1990," in *Immigration and Immigrants: Setting the Record Straight*, eds. Michael Fix and Jeffrey S. Passel (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1994), p. 20.

New Pressures

In the 1990s immigrants are settling both in traditional gateway cities and in rural towns and smaller cities. More states are experiencing this influx than ever before. As noted in the recent NCAS publication *Delivering on the Promise*: "The percentage of the total immigrant population living in New Jersey, for example, is approximately the same as in Florida. Likewise, Connecticut, Illinois, and Nevada are only slightly behind Texas. Rhode Island has a higher percentage of residents who are immigrants than Texas."

The America these immigrants have come to has changed fundamentally since the great migration at the beginning of this century. Because the historic economic expansion of the U.S. economy after World War II has slowed, Americans can no longer look forward to a higher standard of living for their children. Globalization of labor markets, the large national deficit, and the looming insolvency of Social Security and Medicare are free-floating symbols of national anxiety. Into this uncertain social landscape new immigrants come to stake their claim on the future.

Integration, immigration, and the economy are profoundly altering the composition and character of American public schools, introducing different ethnic backgrounds, perspectives, and needs into the same classroom. In some schools, this has produced conflict as students, teachers, and parents take sides—some challenging the established ways of doing things, others adhering to old ways.

Rapidly changing demographics heighten the need to pursue and further develop the field of multicultural education and intergroup relations. Teachers, schools, and parents across the country have begun to develop a wide range of diverse programs to address issues of cultural diversity, cultural sensitivity, conflict resolution and intergroup relations. In this climate, the individual efforts of public schools around the country take center stage.

Resources

The organizations profiled in this appendix represent groups that have taken a lead role in promoting diversity and improving relations between young people of different racial and ethnic groups. We found no organizations to date that focus exclusively on relations between immigrant and nonimmigrant students; however, most understand that this is a critical component in fostering tolerance in the schools and in society. Some provide resources that deal with immigrant/nonimmigrant issues directly, others address these issues through the broader themes of conflict mediation, violence prevention, prejudice exploration, prejudice reduction, self-esteem building, multicultural education, and leadership development. All these efforts are part of the intergroup relations puzzle.

Although most organizations feature all of these broad themes in their work, many specialize, or try to provide unique insight, into one small piece of the puzzle. Some concentrate on preventing intolerance through prejudice reduction, while others look for ways to contain already tense situations through conflict mediation. For example, Facing History and Ourselves and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith focus on providing specific information on racial/ethnic groups designed to counteract myths and stereotypes. The Grace Contrino Abrams Peace Foundation and the Center for Teaching Peace, on the other hand, concentrate on promoting strategies for conflict mediation and conflict resolution.

This collection is by no means comprehensive. Rather, it presents a cross section of some of the best known national organizations currently addressing intergroup relations. Much of the work being done in intergroup relations today is carried out by diverse organizations, coalitions, and partnerships on the local or regional level. Examples of such organizations include Hands Across the Border, Fellowship Farms, and Supporting Diversity in Schools. Therefore, in addition to the national organizations we chose to profile here, we strongly urge you to research local efforts and assistance available.

As providers and educators, it will be necessary for you to put together the pieces of the puzzle in your own way, to meet your own specific needs. We hope these descriptions will help you identify what pieces are still missing and need to be filled in. We hope it is a useful starting point.

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
 823 United Nations Plaza
 New York, NY 10017
 (212) 490-2525

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith has recently expanded their long-standing campaign against discrimination to include educational as well as legal initiatives. A **WORLD OF DIFFERENCE** is a program intended to educate both children and adults on prejudice. The program utilizes community coalitions, media events, and teacher-training workshops to get its message of prejudice reduction across to the general public.

A **WORLD OF DIFFERENCE's** training program operates in 26 cities nationwide and trains teachers of all grade levels to address diversity in their classrooms, examine their own and others' biases, and expand their own cultural awareness. In a workshop environment, trainers and facilitators demonstrate techniques for confronting issues of prejudice and discrimination. Workshop sessions demonstrate the importance of building critical thinking skills and provide experimental learning opportunities for participants. Each training program includes exercises designed to promote full participation, such as simulation activities; role playing; small and large group discussions; case studies; video vignettes; and model lessons.

The ADL also publishes books, pamphlets, posters, and audiovisual materials on human relations for schools designed to explore the dynamics of prejudice and counteract them with accurate information. A catalog of such materials is available.

Center for Teaching Peace
 4501 Van Ness St., NW
 Washington, DC 20016
 (202) 537-1372

The Center for Teaching Peace is a national educational organization that specializes in making peace education programs and curriculum available to students, parents, teachers, administrators, school boards, and anyone else interested in peace education. The Center publishes a newsletter, the *Peace Times*, and has developed a number of different programs to teach peace education to both students and educators. For High School classrooms, the Center offers: a semester-long course entitled "Alternatives to Violence"; a teacher's guide that offers detailed suggestions on what works and what doesn't work in the classroom when teaching nonviolence; a set of 30 essays on peacemaking; and a reading list of some 50 books on nonviolence and peacemaking.

Corresponding curricula, guides, and essays have been developed for the university level as well. The Center also provides the "Alternatives to Violence" curriculum in the form of an eight-lesson home study correspondence course, designed for both newcomers and the more experienced educator who wish to expand their knowledge. Finally, Colman McCarthy, founder and director of the Center for Teaching Peace, frequently visits college and high school campuses to lecture on "How to Be an Effective Peacemaker."

Educators for Social Responsibility
 23 Garden Street
 Cambridge, MA 02138
 (617) 492-1764

Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR) is a national nonprofit organization that creates and disseminates publications and programs for teachers and students emphasizing dialogue, critical thinking, nonviolent conflict resolution, and cooperation. ESR programs are designed to challenge students to look below the surface of complex issues, to ask difficult questions, and to act on their answers. ESR has 30 local chapters around the country offering publications, videos, workshops, seminars, institutes, and technical assistance to professionals working with students.

ESR's workshops, seminars, and summer institutes address the topics of conflict resolution, violence prevention, and multicultural awareness. ESR's programs vary in length from 1-2 hour introductory workshops to 1-3 day seminars, to week-long summer institutes, and 10-40 hour in service programs.

Publications include teacher's guides, textbooks, educational pamphlets, and videos on issues such as resolving conflict creatively and educating for civic participation and global responsibility. All materials can be ordered by calling 1-800-370-2515.

Facing History and Ourselves

25 Kennard Road
Brookline, MA 02146
(617) 232-1595

FHAO is a national nonprofit organization that offers workshops, teacher-training institutes, and classroom-based programs nationwide. Facing History strives to make direct connections between the lives of students and historical events and personalities. Using the case of the collapse of democracy in Germany and the rise of Nazi totalitarianism, the program offers a curriculum that examines such issues as the abuse of power, unquestioning obedience to authority, and the ways in which such abuse was resisted.

The Facing History course is being taught in over 1,500 schools and communities in 46 states and Canada to approximately 450,000 students annually. Courses range from 8th- to 12th-grade offerings to adult education classes.

Facing History also operates a Resource Center out of their headquarters in Brookline, Massachusetts. The Resource Center provides educators with services and resources for examining the History of the Holocaust, genocide, and racism. The Center has an extensive collection of books, films, videos, and article files on the subjects. In exploring the subjects, the Center emphasizes issues related to adolescent and adult development, such as peer pressure, blind obedience, conformity, scapegoating, and stereotyping.

The program's resource manual provides a repository of reading for the student and simultaneously functions as a lesson planning aid for the teacher. Supplementing the resource book are audiovisual materials that teachers may borrow from the Resource Center and speakers from the center who regularly visit Facing History classes.

Educators attend introductory workshops that explain how the program works. Staff members help teachers prepare lessons and syllabi appropriate to their school. In addition, each year the center conducts one- and two-day awareness workshops and three- and four-day institutes to acquaint teachers, support staff, school administrators, and clergy with the dynamics of the program.

The Grace Contrino Abrams Peace Education Foundation

3550 Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 400
Miami, FL 33137
(305) 576-5075; Fax (305) 576-3106

The Grace Contrino Abrams Peace Education Foundation is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to finding creative and nondestructive ways to help young people settle conflicts and live in harmony with themselves and others. The Foundation specializes in conflict management and peace education curricula and materials and also runs a training institute.

The curriculum materials available are easy to implement lessons for preschool and grades K-9 which can be infused into present curriculum. Each lesson gives an introduction, teaching suggestions, and a closure. Examples include, "Fighting Fair: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for Kids"; "Creative Conflict Solving for Kids (Grades 4-9)" and "Come In Spaceship Earth: Kids As Crew Members." All three are complete classroom sets including videos, teacher's guides, posters, and student workbooks.

Conflict management and mediation training workshops for teachers, counselors, and administrators are available on-site and in regional seminars. Workshops are offered to all individuals who want to become more effective in dealing with student conflicts. Comprehensive, schoolwide staff training in conflict resolution and mediation is also available. A complete catalog of materials and programs can be obtained by calling or writing the Foundation at the phone number or address above.

Human Rights Resource Center

615 B Street
San Rafael, CA 94901
(415) 453-0404; Fax (415) 453-1026

The Human Rights Resource Center (HRRRC) seeks practical solutions to human rights issues by providing information and programs designed to promote an understanding and appreciation of both human diversity and commonalities. HRRRC programs assist in practical solutions to community issues and concerns. HRRRC services include: awareness training, informational data base, informational material, and technical assistance.

HRRRC awareness training is comprehensive and includes a pretraining needs assessment, the exploration of self and other cultures, and strategies and techniques for continuing action.

The HRRRC informational data base is called the Client Directed Information Services Program (CDIS) and provides immediate access to a national clearinghouse network that provides current information on an extensive number of human rights topics for the service provider. HRRRC's informational materials include: HRRRC's bimonthly newsletter *Human Rights Resources*; informational manuals on current issues (i.e., "Responding to Hate Crimes"), and packets of essential information for public agencies and private businesses.

Finally, HRRRC provides technical assistance through consultation and facilitation services; needs assessment; and community forums for organizations and individuals in all walks of life.

National Association for Mediation in Education

425 Amity Street
Amherst, MA 01002
(413) 545-2462

The National Association for Mediation in Education (NAME) strives to develop, implement, and sustain school-based conflict resolution programs and push for greater understanding of the field through research, publication, and advocacy. NAME maintains a clearinghouse for information on conflict resolution and distributes books, manuals, and articles pertinent to the field. A publications list is available and is broken down by topic to assist providers, i.e., "Rationale for Starting a Program," "Setting Up a Program," "Teaching Conflict Resolution," and "Evaluation." Bimonthly newsletters, annual conferences, and regional networking activities provide a network of support for conflict resolution and peacemaking programs in the schools.

NAME also provides technical assistance to existing and developing conflict resolution efforts in a variety of formats including in-class, school-based mediation, and law-related education. Finally, NAME supports theory and research efforts that increase the understanding of conflict resolution programs in educational settings.

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education
1118 22nd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
1-800-321-NCBE; Fax 202-467-0867

The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) provides bilingual educators with information on the education of limited-English proficient (LEP) students. NCBE reference and referral information can be obtained by writing, faxing, or calling NCBE at their "800" number.

When a client calls the NCBE reference line, NCBE information specialists identify possible sources of information, and information resources are then mailed to the client. The types of materials clients can receive include bibliographic abstracts describing publications or classroom materials, their source and availability; photocopied articles or portions of documents containing information on topics requested; information packets on frequently requested topics; NCBE publications; or short bibliographies listing current literature addressing the educational needs of limited-English proficient students. Clients may receive information related to first language instruction in languages such as Vietnamese, Russian, Navajo, Portuguese, Hmong, Yup'ik, Philipino, and Spanish. Clients may also receive ESL instructional materials and programs for language minorities in areas such as math, science, and gifted and talented.

NCBE also publishes a bimonthly newsletter containing new and current information about events and advances in the education of LEP students; *Information Guides for Practitioners*; and *Focus*, which includes thought-provoking articles on issues of current concern. For information on how to obtain NCBE publications, call the "800" NCBE number and request a copy of the current NCBE publications list.

The National Conference
71 Fifth Avenue
Suite 1100
New York, NY 10003
(212) 206-0006

The National Conference, formerly the National Conference of Christians and Jews, is a national nonprofit, nonsectarian human relations organization. Founded in 1928 with the goal of reducing prejudice and intergroup conflict, it is now the nation's most comprehensive human relations organization. The National Conference has offices in 75 major regions of the country and continues to strive for a workable pluralism.

Although each regional office adapts programs to local needs, the work of all National Conference programs are united by three common objectives: 1) to nurture individual self worth; 2) to encourage the acceptance and appreciation of persons different from one's self; and 3) to discover ways in which all persons can cooperate in the enjoyment and sustenance of a democratic society.

Among its short-term residential programs for young people, the National Conference offers "Brotherhood/Sisterhood USA" and "Anytown," both of which bring youths of various racial and ethnic backgrounds together for intense living experiences and workshops away from the daily demands of society. Other programs, such as the "Youth Leadership Program" are school-based training programs for young people that take place throughout the school year and are designed to complement summer workshops and residential programs.

Different regional offices fashion programs to fit local needs.

The National Conference also serves educators and youth through their extensive listing of recommended books for children and adults that portray relationships among people of different cultural backgrounds, races, and religions. For a more complete listing of National Conference programs and resources available in your region, please contact either the National Conference national office or your regional National Conference office.

National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence

31 South Greene Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-1587
(301) 328-5170

The National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence is a private nonprofit research, resource, and educational organization dedicated to the study of and response to ethnoviolence. The Institute runs a clearinghouse that collects, analyzes, publishes, and distributes materials and information on ethnoviolence available to the general public. Research is also conducted on the causes of ethnoviolence and its effect on victims and communities. Results are applied in building effective programs of education, prevention, and response. Finally, the Institute educates and advocates by carrying out human relations training, seminars and conferences, legislative advocacy, and legal analysis.

National School Safety Center

4165 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Suite 290
Westlake Village, CA 91362
(805) 373-9977

National School Safety Center (NSSC) serves as a national clearinghouse for school safety programs and activities related to campus security, school law, community relations, student discipline, and attendance, and the prevention of drug abuse, gangs, and bullying. The Center's primary objective is to focus national attention on the importance of providing safe and effective schools. Resources of the Center include: the School Safety News Service which provides NSSC newsletters, news journals, and magazines; School Safety Check Book; Child Safety Curriculum Standards; NSSC Resource Papers; films, tapes, and display posters. To order these resources or obtain a complete listing of NSSC resources and prices, write NSSC at the address above.

The Southern Poverty Law Center

400 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104
(205) 264-0286

The Southern Poverty Law Center, a well-known civil rights organization, has recently launched a magazine devoted to improving intergroup relations called *Teaching Tolerance*. *Teaching Tolerance* is a 64-page, full-color magazine published twice a year by the Center and mailed free to teachers nationwide. Its goal is to provide educators with ideas, resources, and techniques for teaching tolerance in a diverse society. The magazine features in depth portraits of school programs, idea exchange for teachers, a resource guide, and student activities, essays, and interviews. The magazine is part of a new education initiative by the Center. Other projects include a film and text curriculum package on the history of the civil rights movement. The curriculum kit, like the magazine, is funded by private donations and is available free to educators.

National Coalition of Advocates for Students

NCAS began in 1975 as a voluntary network of education advocates concerned about rising suspension and expulsion rates in public schools. Since then, NCAS has grown into a national advocacy organization with 20 member groups in 13 states and the District of Columbia.

NCAS works to achieve equal access to a quality public education for vulnerable students, particularly those who are poor, children of color, recently immigrated, or differently abled.

No other national coalition works full-time on public school issues from the perspective of meeting the needs of students who are not well served by the public schools.

Focusing on kindergarten through grade 12, NCAS informs and mobilizes citizens and policymakers to help resolve critical education issues. Utilizing national projects and studies, public hearings and outreach through publications and the news media, NCAS raises concerns that might otherwise not be heard.

NCAS believes fundamental structural changes are needed within schools and school systems. When a significant percentage of students fail academically or leave school before graduation, NCAS holds the school accountable. Because some schools serve all of their students well, the coalition believes that all schools can do so. Accordingly, NCAS seeks stronger governance roles for parents, who, in turn, press for needed changes in school policy and practice.

Seeking Answers to Complex Questions

Advocating for improved opportunity for vulnerable constituents draws NCAS into challenging and sometimes controversial areas seeking answers to complex questions that face students, parents, and educators. For example:

- How to assess student achievement in ways that are both useful and fair.
- How to challenge damaging school practices such as ability grouping, tracking, labeling, grade retention, suspension, expulsion, and corporal punishment.
- How to provide special education services without relegating students to inferior classrooms from which they cannot escape.
- How to reduce drugs and violence in schools while acknowledging individual dignity and human rights.
- How to address the issues resulting from the many languages and cultures that immigrant students bring into the classroom.
- How to provide school-based support services to students facing youth unemployment, drug and alcohol abuse, AIDS and HIV infection, teenage pregnancy, street violence, suicide, and racial and cultural discrimination.

Other NCAS National Projects

Mobilization for Equity is a five-year project launched in 1995 to build public will to remedy the equity failures of recent federal, state, and local school reforms. The project aims to encourage policy outcomes and changes in school practice to actualize key student rights to help ensure educational equity for all students.

The Good Common School Project addresses the need for fundamental school reform. The project publication, *The Good Common School: Making the Vision Work for All Children*, defines 10 critical student entitlements that will make schools more responsive to the needs of all students. By blending a vision of fairer schools with a critique of current education research and school policies and practices, the Good Common School Project offers parents, educators, and advocates a comprehensive guide to advocacy-driven reform.

The National Center for Immigrant Students seeks to stimulate networking and information-sharing, expand advocacy on behalf of foreign-born students, and examine emerging federal, state, and local policy initiatives likely to impact on the school success of immigrant students. National Center publications include: *New Voices Newsletter*; *New Voices: Immigrant Students in U.S. Public Schools*; *Immigrant Students: Their Legal Right of Access to Public Schools*.

The Clearinghouse for Immigrant Education (CHIME) is an interactive clearinghouse and networking service that facilitates access to educational materials, organizations, and people concerned with the effective education of immigrant students. CHIME staff survey available resources, help callers

to make networking connections, and provide advice in response to specific requests. CHIME can be reached via its toll-free number, 1-800-441-7192.

The Asian Family/School Partnership Project seeks to expand understanding of how public schools, Asian families, and their communities can build effective partnerships to support the school success of Asian students. It identifies and develops effective partnership-building strategies that improve access to public schools for Asian parents and communities.

Viviremos is a bilingual HIV/AIDS prevention project working to help targeted teen populations—migrant farmworkers, immigrants, and Latino youth—learn how to protect themselves from HIV infection. Viviremos publications include *Criteria for Evaluating an AIDS Curriculum*, *Guidelines for HIV & AIDS Student Support Services*, a bilingual AIDS curriculum *¡Viviremos! On the Road to Healthy Living/El Camino Hacia la Salud*, *Steps to Help Your School Set Up an AIDS Education Program* published in English and Spanish, and *Cultivating Health: An Agenda for Adolescent Farmworkers*.

Many NCAS services to public schools that serve immigrant children are free. NCAS also offers on-site needs assessment, consultation, and training to diverse public schools at reasonable cost. Most technical assistance services to community-based organizations are free. For more information, call Joan First, (617) 357-8507.

Member Organizations

**Advocates for Children of
New York**
24-16 Bridge Plaza South
Long Island, NY 11101-4620

**Arkansas Advocates for Children
and Families**
931 Donaghey Building
Little Rock, AR 72201

ASPIRA Association, Incorporated
1112 16th Street NW, Suite 340
Washington, DC 20036

California Tomorrow
Fort Mason Center, Building B
San Francisco, CA 94123-1380

Center for Law and Education
1875 Connecticut Avenue NW,
Suite 501
Washington, DC 20009

197 Friend Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114

Children's Defense Fund
25 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Coalition for Quality Education
1702 Upton Avenue
Toledo, OH 43607

Designs for Change
6 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60602

The Education Law Center
155 Washington Street, Room 209
Newark, NJ 07102-3106

801 Arch Street, Suite 610
Philadelphia, PA 19107

The Public Education Institute
Building 4090
Livingston Campus, Rutgers
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

**Intercultural Development
Research Association**
5835 Callaghan Road, Number 350
San Antonio, TX 78228-1125

Kentucky Youth Advocates
624 Shelby Street
Frankfort, KY 40601

Massachusetts Advocacy Center
100 Boylston Street, 2nd Floor
Boston, MA 02116

**Mississippi Human Services
Agenda**
P.O. Box 1684
Jackson, MS 39205-1684

**Multicultural Education Training
and Advocacy, Incorporated**
240-A Elm Street
Somerville, MA 02144

National Council of La Raza
1111 19th Street NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20036

**North Carolina Education
and Law Project**
P.O. Box 27343
Raleigh, NC 27601

**Parents Union for Public
Schools**
6205 Homer Street
Philadelphia, PA 19144

**Statewide Youth Advocacy,
Incorporated**
17 Elk Street
Albany, NY 12207-1002

Student Advocacy Center
The New Center Building
1100 North Main Street, Suite 212
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-3006

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**NATIONAL COALITION OF ADVOCATES FOR STUDENTS
BOSTON, MA**